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A STUDY OF RELIGIOUS THOUGHT IN ENGLAND FROM 1850

being the
OLAUS PETRI LECTURES
delivered at UPSALA *in* 1932

BY

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Dedicated to the
Dear and Honoured Memory of
NATHAN SÖDERBLOM
ARCHBISHOP OF UPSALA AND FIRST INSPECTOR
OF THE OLAUS PETRI FOUNDATION
and also to
FRU ANNA SÖDERBLOM
in Remembrance of the gracious Hospitality
extended under the Shadow of a great Sorrow
to the Last Guests
of her Illustrious Husband

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PREFACE

THIS book, which contains the Olaus Petri Lectures delivered in the University of Upsala in the spring of 1932, is not intended to be a complete history of religious thought in England from 1850. It is no more than a study of that history from a particular point of view, illustrated by some account of certain episodes and personalities which the author has selected, either because he believed himself to have something to say about them, or because he thought they would be of interest to his audience; an audience for which some facts familiar to Englishmen might have the attraction of novelty, some features of English life require explanation which Englishmen would take for granted. Indeed, though it was found convenient to publish the work in English first, it is to be considered primarily as the text from which a Swedish translation is eventually to be made.

I have to express my gratitude to the late Archbishop of Upsala for the invitation extended to me by him, in his capacity of Inspector of the Olaus Petri Foundation, to deliver these lectures in the University of which he was so distinguished an ornament; to the present Inspector, Professor Andrae, the Secretary, Mr. Carlström, and to all those who made my stay in their ancient city so delightful and interesting; above all to the gracious lady mentioned

in the dedication of the book and the other members of the family of the late Archbishop for their hospitality and abounding kindness.

I carried away from Sweden the memory of many happy days spent in the enjoyment of that hospitality and in the pleasant occupation of acquainting myself with a city, a university, and a country to which I shall ever remain bound by ties of true gratitude and affection. I wish only that the book which owes its origin to the visit of a representative of Oxford to Upsala were worthier to bear on its title-page the names of those two venerable seats of learning.

C. C. J. W.

I

INTRODUCTORY

WHEN, three years ago,[1] I was honoured by an invitation to deliver the Olaus Petri Lectures in the University of Upsala, it was through the late Archbishop Söderblom that the invitation was conveyed, and I do not doubt that it was on his initiative that it was extended to me. When I accepted it, and until that sad day in last July[2] on which the news reached England of the passing from us of that great servant of God and of humanity I had looked forward to renewed intercourse with him as one of the chief satisfactions which I could promise myself, when indulging in happy anticipations of my first visit to the famous and beautiful land of which Upsala is, as it were, at once the Canterbury and the Oxford. His absence has inevitably cast a shadow over the brightness of the occasion. It was my good fortune in the year 1923 to welcome him as a guest in my house on the occasion of his receiving from the University of Oxford the honorary degree of Doctor of Civil Law; and I need not tell those who knew him far better than I how much I enjoyed the opportunity of entertaining so charming a guest, and how greatly I treasure the memory of my friendship with one than whom among the men of his time

[1] In 1929. I have left these first paragraphs as they were delivered in 1932 at Upsala. [2] 1931.

none has more assuredly earned the blessing pronounced by the Preacher on the Mount upon the peacemakers.[1] In an age in which the nations of the world 'made themselves ready for battle' waged on a scale to which history presents no parallel, he 'laboured for peace' among the peoples; and not less for union and concord among the severed members of Christ's mystical body. Everywhere he carried that divine message, of which the prophet tells us,[2] of peace to him that is far off and to him that is near; in his unremitting zeal to persuade all who bear the Christian name to manifest in thought and word and deed the brotherhood of those into whose hearts Christ's Spirit of Sonship hath been sent forth, he approved himself a true child of God, and now has part in the inheritance of the righteous who 'shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father'.[3]

It is well known that the late Archbishop had a great affection for my country; and although the subject which I have chosen, the history of religious thought in that country from 1850, was not suggested by him, it is certainly one in which he was deeply interested; and I shall endeavour so to treat it as to make it helpful to the consideration of a topic of the first importance which he did suggest, but which, having just published another course of lectures[4]

[1] Matt. v. 9. [2] Isa. lvii. 19. [3] Matt. xiii. 43.
[4] *Religion and the Thought of To-day* (Humphrey Milford, 1929).

upon it I did not feel able to take expressly for my theme, the subject, namely, of the place of religion in modern life.

It will be convenient at the outset of this course to give some explanation of the title by which I have chosen to describe it—*A Study of Religious Thought in England from 1850.*

By 'religious thought' I shall here mean chiefly what is usually understood by the term 'philosophy of religion'. I shall indeed consider this not merely as expounded systematically by writers professedly engaged in that branch of philosophical inquiry, but also as implied in movements of religious life outside of the schools. Yet I shall not be concerned primarily with ecclesiastical controversies nor with the discussion of the theological dogmas which are in dispute between the different communions and sects of English as of other Christians; but rather with the intellectual attitude towards religion—and this must in a Christian country mean in the main towards the Christian religion—adopted by men concerned in the attempt, which is the occupation of the philosopher, to work out for themselves a view of the world as a whole.

Again, I do not propose to confine my attention solely to England in the strict sense of the word; nor to refrain from extending my survey on occasion beyond even the British Empire or the English-speaking world to that general movement of Western thought of which at any moment the thought of any

one Western country is as it were a particular eddy in the current. But I shall regard this scene in a certain perspective, as seen from England and, within England, from the point of view of the Anglican rather than from that of the Nonconformist or the Roman Catholic; perhaps rather from that of Oxford than from that of Cambridge or any other seat of learning. For in England, as (I suppose) in every country with a complicated social structure, there are differences of outlook, even on to problems of universal import, correspondent with the religious or academic atmosphere in which the observer has been bred; and it probably makes for a more effective presentation of my theme not to be over-anxious to remove all trace of these inevitable differences, but to warn my hearers against them, and so to pass to my subject.

Lastly, with respect to the date which I have chosen for my starting-point, it is intended to mark the period at which the Oxford Movement,[1] although its leaven was still powerfully at work, had spent its first force; but the epoch-making suggestions of Darwin concerning the method of creation and the origin of man had not yet startled the thinking world out of acquiescence in a picture of the background of human history which might be compatible with the account thereof given in the Bible. I shall carry on my story into the present century, but shall only

[1] Of which a Swedish scholar, Dr. Y. Brilioth, has given an admirable study (*The Anglican Revival*, Longmans, 1925).

occasionally refer to any occurrence later than 1914. For in that year the outbreak of the World War brought one era of human history to an end, and inaugurated another, on the threshold of which we are still standing; and on the interpretation of which it is not for a man of my generation, a generation which had reached maturity before that catastrophe, rashly to adventure himself.

In the middle of the last century the intellectual world of England, and especially that part of it which concerned itself with theology, was still, speaking generally, somewhat isolated from that of the continent of Europe. The revolutionary movement, amid the stir of which the eighteenth century had ended and the nineteenth begun, while of course affecting in a thousand ways the life and thought of England, had yet left the structure of the English State and the tradition of English Church life comparatively intact; and in speaking of the tradition of English Church life, I am not confining the application of the phrase to the established Church of the country. In the region of philosophical speculation it was a long time before the intellectual revolution associated with the name of Kant—a revolution in which many (notably among them the poet Heine[1]) have recognized the spiritual analogue of the contemporary political revolution in France—produced upon English thought an effect comparable to that which it produced upon the thought of Kant's own

[1] *Deutschland*, Buch 3, ed. Lachmann, iii, pp. 72, 73.

Germany and of the peoples who stood more immediately under the influence of German culture.

On the one hand, then, the civilization of England at this period offered in some very important respects a contrast to that of her neighbours as more stable, more conservative, less up-to-date, to use a modern colloquialism, than they. On the other hand, this same comparative immunity of England from revolutionary disturbance had combined with the inventive genius of its people to make it the birthplace of the 'Industrial Revolution', the pioneer of an enormous development of mechanical aids to the production of wealth and improvements of the means of communication, the scene of a rapidly increasing material prosperity based upon that development. It was quite natural that this development should have tended to direct the attention of English thinkers to the study of the natural forces upon the knowledge of which was based the exploitation of them in mechanical invention, and to that of the economic principles illustrated by the expanding wealth characteristic of the age.

Now the effect upon religion and religious thought of this orientation of the national mind was in strong contrast with what we observe in contemporary Germany. The interest of the English philosopher (and it is significant that the word was commonly used in England during the earlier part of the nineteenth century to mean what we should now prefer to call a 'man of science') was concentrated upon the

laws exemplified by the action of these natural forces on the one hand, and on the other on those which controlled the production and distribution of wealth. This fact was obviously likely to lead, and in some cases actually did lead, to a more or less complete rejection of religion as something unverified and unverifiable by the only methods which were generally regarded as rational and scientific; while, with persons of a more religious temperament, it no less naturally tended to effect a more or less complete separation between their scientific and their religious convictions, the latter being retained side by side with the former, as if in compartments of the mind which did not communicate with each other, and both being exempted from any thorough-going criticism in the light of what the Germans call a *Weltanschauung* (it is characteristic that the word has no precise English equivalent)—a view of the world of our experience as a single whole. The well-known case of Faraday, the great physicist and electrician,[1] who remained throughout his life a loyal member of a small literalist or (as it would nowadays be called) fundamentalist sect of Scottish origin, the Sandemanians, is but an extreme instance of what is a notable feature in the spiritual life of the nation in the period to which he belonged. It would certainly be a grave mistake to suppose that the English people was at that time irreligious. On the contrary, religious movements exercised a very great influence upon the

[1] B. 1791; d. 1867.

political and social history of the country in the early nineteenth century. But while in Germany the most prominent philosophers were constantly occupied with the problems suggested by the doctrines of religion, and the most prominent theologians with the philosophical interpretation of the doctrines of their Church, in England the philosophers were indisposed to treat the doctrines of the theologians, and the theologians indisposed to treat the criticisms of the philosophers with the respect due to considerations which must in any case seriously affect their own beliefs and proceedings. Although the one group might not in all cases regard the preoccupations of the other with hostility, and although some members of each group might even be sincerely interested in what was the main concern of the other, it may, I think, be said with truth that each group was disposed rather to emphasize the mutual distinctness of their respective interests and to repel the encroachment of either upon the other's domain than to attempt a comprehensive view of both as parts of a single experience, such as Philosophy, properly so called, is bound to endeavour to obtain.

I will now sketch very briefly what seem to me to have been the outstanding assumptions of the epoch in English religious thought which immediately preceded the period with which it is proposed in this course of lectures to deal: assumptions which it has been the task of thinkers during that period itself to question and to criticize, and sometimes to aban-

don. No doubt many exceptions and qualifications would have to be introduced into my sketch, were it to pretend to be more than a very rough outline of historic truth.

I think we may reckon among these outstanding assumptions the following four: (*a*) the transcendence of God; (*b*) the origin of the material world in an act of creation in time; (*c*) the claim of Scripture to be an authoritative revelation of truth otherwise unobtainable by man; (*d*) the happiness and salvation of individual souls as the supreme concern of religion.

I do not of course suggest that all thinkers of this period who turned their attention to religion were prepared to assert the existence of a transcendent God, the creation of the world in time, the inspiration of Scripture, or the immortality of individual souls. But, whether these articles were affirmed, denied, or left doubtful, it was generally agreed that religion was bound up with belief in a transcendent God, the Creator of the world; that to be a Christian involved acceptance of the Bible as giving on the whole a true account of man's origin, history, and destiny; that a religion must be judged according as it tends to promote the happiness of individual human beings, and that therefore the question whether we, as individuals, can look forward to a life beyond the grave or no, and, if we can, what provision can be made for securing happiness for ourselves therein, is the most urgent of all questions which a religious teacher can be called upon to answer.

Now during the second half of the nineteenth century a number of influences combined to promote a change in the intellectual atmosphere which induced a slackening of the hold of these assumptions on the minds of thoughtful Englishmen, and to favour the growth of what I shall, for convenience' sake, describe as an *immanentist* tendency. This tendency has already modified profoundly the religious thought, and even to a considerable extent the practical religion of my countrymen; while we are now, as I shall indicate in the later lectures of my course, witnessing an inevitable reaction towards a new emphasis upon precisely those factors in religious experience which a theology of immanence is tempted to neglect.

The most far-reaching in its effects among these influences was probably the idea of *evolution*. The rise of this idea to the dominance which it exercised over the minds of men, in England as well as elsewhere, by the end of the last century, is to be associated with the publication at the end of the first decade of our period, in the year 1859, of Darwin's[1] epoch-making book, *The Origin of Species*, and, some years afterwards, in 1871, of its sequel, *The Descent of Man*. In these works striking evidence was brought forward in support of the suggestion that 'natural selection', through the better chance of survival given to those individuals of a species who should vary from the common nature of their kind in direc-

[1] Charles Darwin, b. 1809; d. 1882.

tions calculated to fit them better to their environment, might account for the origin of new species, including that to which we ourselves belong. Thus the theory, not now brought forward by any means for the first time, that man is descended from the same stock as at any rate those lower animals whose resemblance to him has earned them the designation of 'anthropoid apes', was removed from the position of a strange speculation incapable of verification to that of a plausible and even probable hypothesis. For it proposed a *modus operandi* for nature in the derivation of the human from inferior forms of life which could be regarded as, in Newton's phrase, a *vera causa*, since it is by deliberate selection on a like principle that our gardeners and breeders of domestic animals bring about the appearance of wonderfully improved varieties of the particular kind of organism with which they are respectively concerned.

Now this Darwinian hypothesis inevitably challenged the account of the origin of our race contained in the book of Genesis. The credit of that account, considered as a record of facts regarding the remote past, had indeed already been seriously shaken by the geological investigations which suggested an antiquity for our dwelling-place, the earth, immensely greater than the most liberal interpretations of the ancient Hebrew cosmogonist could allow to it. It was this incidental inconsistency between the evolutionary theory of the origin of man and that contained in what the great majority of religious people in the

country had been taught to regard as a direct revelation from God to man that caused religious controversy to rage around the idea of evolution from the time of the appearance of the two works of Darwin which I have already named. But the importance to religious thought of the introduction of the idea of evolution was of course far greater than it would have been, had it merely, in its application in a particular form to a particular case, led to a questioning of the claim of Scripture to be considered as possessing infallible authority in respect of its statements regarding matters which fall within the domain of natural science. Regarded, especially by Herbert Spencer,[1] as the enunciation of a principle valid throughout the universe, it seemed, at any rate to some minds, to explain by processes going on *within* the universe what it had previously been commonly maintained that an intelligent Power *beyond* and *above* the universe was required to account for. If this use of the idea of evolution was to be reconciled with religion at all, it must plainly be by some doctrine of divine *immanence*, which should replace an instantaneous operation of *transcendent* divine power, calling the world into existence out of nothing in a form substantially the same from the first as it wears to-day, such as was then commonly supposed to be implied by the term 'creation', by a gradual operation of God whereby some simple germ or seed might be developed into an ever progressively richer variety

[1] B. 1820; d. 1903.

of forms. Moreover, if the world-process were thus to be conceived after the analysis of the known facts of organic life, it would almost inevitably follow that individual members of any species, and therefore individual human beings among the rest, would come to be envisaged rather as transitory embodiments of relatively abiding types than as themselves the supremely important realities for the sake of which the whole process exists. The poet who was above all others the representative voice of mid-nineteenth-century England, Alfred Tennyson,[1] had already in his *In Memoriam*, an elegy on a dead friend, published in 1850, the year with which the period I am considering begins (and so some time before the appearance of Darwin's book), given utterance to the doubts which the new geology had led the way in suggesting and the new biology was to spread everywhere.

> Are God and Nature then at strife,
> That Nature lends such evil dreams?
> So careful of the type she seems,
> So careless of the single life; . . .
>
> 'So careful of the type?' But no.
> From scarped cliff and quarried stone
> She cries: 'A thousand types are gone:
> I care for nothing, all shall go.
>
> 'Thou makest thine appeal to me:
> I bring to life, I bring to death:
> The spirit does but mean the breath:
> I know no more.' . . .[2]

[1] B. 1809; d. 1892.

[2] *In Memoriam*, lv, lvi.

Thus the immediate impact of the idea of evolution on the mind of the religious world in England in the middle of the nineteenth century was apt to subvert all the assumptions which I have mentioned as commonly made in the preceding period; the transcendence of God, the creation of the world substantially in its present form, the authority of the Bible as an historical record, and the natural immortality of the individual soul.

But the idea of evolution, although the principal, was not the sole agent in bringing about the abandonment of the assumptions commonly made by the theology in vogue in England before 1850. The philosophy which lay behind the Romantic Movement, which had found expression in the work of Goethe, and had worked itself out into systematic forms in the hands of the great idealistic thinkers who in Germany had succeeded Kant—of Fichte, of Schelling, of Hegel, of Schopenhauer—this philosophy had already manifested a tendency away from the older theism and towards what I have called immanentism. It is true that this philosophy was long in making head in England against the strongly entrenched tradition of empiricism and naturalism represented, at the epoch which we are now considering, by John Stuart Mill,[1] and later on by Herbert Spencer. But it was already in 1850 exerting a profound influence over the higher minds of the nation; chiefly, at that date, through Thomas Carlyle,[2] who

[1] B. 1806; d. 1873.

[2] B. 1795; d. 1881.

had constituted himself the prophet to his fellow-countrymen of the great German poet to whose inspiration the German idealistic philosophers had owed so much.

The writings of Carlyle were, however, not the only channel through which the immanentism characteristic of these philosophers was at this time affecting English religious thought. The so-called Transcendentalism which constituted the response of American culture to the speculative movement in Germany, and of which Emerson was the most eminent exponent, was not without its effect in the country from which the ancestors of the New Englanders had come. The new American Unitarianism allied therewith, which, as represented by Theodore Parker, had discarded the belief in miracles and in the supernatural (though not in the strict sense divine) dignity of Christ which earlier Unitarians had retained, found in England an able and enthusiastic preacher in Francis Newman,[1] the younger brother of the great John Henry Newman[2] (whose secession from Anglicanism to Roman Catholicism had taken place five years before the date at which our survey begins). It is true that neither Theodore Parker nor his older English contemporary James Martineau[3], whose chief contributions to the philosophy of religion were not to be made until long afterwards when he was a very old man,[4] can be

[1] B. 1803; d. 1897.
[2] B. 1801; d. 1890.
[3] B. 1805; d. 1900.
[4] See below, p. 125.

reckoned as themselves champions of immanentism in religion. The transcendence of God was held by both, and by Martineau was emphatically insisted upon against the pantheistic tendencies of the German idealists. Yet in their rejection of all external credentials of revelation in favour of the inward witness of reason or conscience, which they regarded as the sole seat of authority in religion,[1] they must be considered as exemplifying the general trend of thought in an immanentist direction and away from the assumptions which an earlier generation had, as we have seen, been in the habit of making.

As the century went on, there appeared a more definite and systematic form of idealistic philosophy, which, having gone to school to the great German masters, challenged the current empiricism as a critic and opponent of its principles, method, and conclusions, and finally succeeded, at least in academic circles, in ousting that mode of thought from the position of predominance which it had for a long time enjoyed. This philosophy was essentially, though not always with a full consciousness of so being, what I have called *immanentist* in its religious standpoint, so that the assumptions which I have mentioned as commonly made alike by English theologians and by English critics of theology in the period preceding that with which we are concerned, were alien to its character and genius.

[1] See Martineau's book, *The Seat of Authority in Religion*, published 1890.

The idea of evolution, on the other hand, the dissolvent effect of which upon these same assumptions I have already noted, was thoroughly congenial to the new idealism. Goethe himself, who was, as we have seen, commonly regarded as their master by the German thinkers to whom it owed its chief inspiration, had been a pioneer in the employment of this idea to interpret the facts of organic life; and the same idea had, in another form, dominated the whole scheme of the Hegelian logic. Although the type of philosophy, of which I am speaking, found itself, when starting on its career in England in the middle of the last century, opposed to the purely naturalistic evolutionism of Spencer, this attitude was by no means adopted because its exponents ignored the philosophical importance of the thought of a single principle manifested in a succession of various forms, each continuous with its predecessor, and all contributing to the expression of the principle which gives unity to the whole series. It was rather because, in the opinion of his idealistic critics, Spencer had failed to discover an intelligible principle which should impart to the succession of forms which he described the character of a real development at all.

Alongside of the idea of evolution, successfully employed by biologists as a clue to the understanding of the world of organisms and by anthropologists[1]

[1] The word *anthropology* came into common use during our period to designate the study of the manners and customs of primitive humanity.

as a clue to that of social, political, and religious phenomena, as well as made by Herbert Spencer to serve as a principle for unifying phenomena of all sorts,[1] we must reckon, as an influence tending to emancipate religious thought from the assumptions of an earlier generation, the rise of a new *historical sense*.

This historical sense will perhaps be eventually considered the most original and distinctive feature of the mentality characteristic of the nineteenth century. Its rise was closely linked with the predominance of the idea of evolution. For under the influence of that idea certain suggestions could not but present themselves: namely that the later states of communities and institutions might be connected with the earlier as the fruit with the flower and the seed, and as old age with maturity and infancy; or (after the fashion of a logical rather than of a biological development) the theories and doctrines which inspire political or religious communities in their later stages with those which inspired them in their earlier, as a synthesis with the thesis and antithesis which alike find their fulfilment therein. In the light of these suggestions history promised to reveal to those who would go to it for instruction something more interesting than a mere museum of isolated facts or, at most, a storehouse of precedents for imitation or warning. Such a promise gave an

[1] Including some its applicability to which is, to say the least, extremely doubtful.

encouragement and stimulus to historical research which it could not have received so long as it could appeal only to antiquarian curiosity or to the desire to prove one's own opinions or policies to have been those of venerated personalities in the past. But the birth and progress of an historical sense, issuing in a theory of the past at once incomparably more sympathetic and incomparably more critical than any previously known, was bound to affect a religion such as was that of the vast majority of Englishmen, a religion to which the appeal to the historical record of its Founder's acts and words was fundamental and essential, and which had placed in a position of supreme religious authority a collection of writings whereof (though no doubt much else was included within it) the very centre and kernel consisted of a number of professedly historical documents. The application to the Christian Scriptures of the critical methods which were now coming to be universally used in the study of all other documents combined with the new scientific theories already mentioned to render it out of the question for any one whose mind was not closed against new impressions to regard those Scriptures as a revelation of pure and unadulterated truth. It was thus inevitable that those who were aware beyond the possibility of doubt that these writings had been to themselves the channel of an experience which they could not but recognize as experience of communion with a Divine Spirit should endeavour to set

in the place of the notion of a transcendent Deity uttering an infallible oracle that of an immanent Divine Power moulding, as it were from within, the history of a chosen people and the thoughts of prophets and apostles to be the vehicle of spiritual illumination and nourishment to the minds and souls of those who might hear or read the sacred record or the utterances of the inspired teachers.

There were thus many influences which united in the latter part of the nineteenth century to unsettle the assumptions which were the legacy of the eighteenth and to promote the advance of what I have called immanentism. There was, moreover, an obvious congruity with such a tendency in the bias which was becoming increasingly evident towards a less *individualistic* type of thought and, in particular, of piety than the nineteenth century had found prevalent in England. For evolutionary science and history were apt to impress upon the individual a sense of his own comparative insignificance as being but a member of a vast organism, apart from whose life his own is unintelligible and, except as a contribution thereto, vain and purposeless.

The immanentist tendency of religious thought in England during the second half of the nineteenth century must be studied, if one is to appreciate it aright, against the background of the general experience of civilized Europe. I will therefore now pass to a very summary indication of what such a study of it would be found to reveal.

II

GENERAL SKETCH OF THE PERIOD

A. THE EUROPEAN BACKGROUND

FROM the end of the Middle Ages onwards, the whole drift of thought and practice in western Christendom had been in the direction of an attempt to find *within* what we call 'this world' that which to the man of the Middle Ages had been on the whole presented as belonging to 'another world' and manifested in 'this world' only through a supernatural intervention from that *other*. We see this in the Renaissance, with its deliberate cultivation of a recovered sense of legitimate enjoyment in the pursuit of earthly beauty and material wealth. We see it in the Reformation, with its assertion of the equal or superior value of the life of a free, prosperous, married Christian citizen as compared with that of a monk bound by a rule of celibacy, poverty, and obedience, withdrawn from the duties and responsibilities of a secular career, and placed under the protection of an organization regarded as essentially supernatural and supernational in its origin and sanctions. We see it in the philosophy of Descartes, which made the immediate certainty of our own existence the inexpugnable basis of all knowledge, and called into question (though in the end it gave an affirmative answer to the question) the reality of

any finite thing beyond or outside of ourselves with which we are in relation. We see it again in the Revolutions, the English and the French, with their rejection of a divine right to sovereignty belonging to certain persons in favour of a sovereignty recognized as inherent in the people itself which is to be governed. It was inevitable that a tendency so marked in all the great movements of an age should eventually manifest itself in the religion of every nation belonging to the general system of civilization within which these movements had appeared.

It must not, however, be supposed that the history of European thought throughout three or four centuries can be adequately summed up in a simple formula. There were undoubtedly aspects of the very movements which I have just mentioned which may seem not to conform to the general account which I have given of them. Nevertheless, I think it would be true to say that in the way which I have indicated they made, at least in the long run, for a conception of God as *immanent* rather than *transcendent*; and this is the point upon which I now wish to lay stress. On the other hand, they probably made *for* rather than *against* the individualism which I reckoned[1] as characteristic of the period preceding that which is the subject of these lectures. The whole trend of the Renaissance was in the direction of the glorification of *individual* capacity and achievement. The Reformers and their successors regarded them-

[1] Above, p. 20.

selves as champions of the *individual* conscience. Descartes, as I said, found the starting-point of philosophical inquiry in the *individual's* assurance of his own existence. *Individualistic* capitalism was, as has been pointed out by Max Weber and Ernst Troeltsch, in a sense the offspring of the Calvinistic Reformation. In the socialistic trend of so much of the thought and practice of the later nineteenth century, an important feature of the spiritual life of the age which has had no small influence upon its religion, we are witnessing rather a reaction from than a continuation of the line of development characteristic of the preceding period. The evidence, however, for this, as of other statements in these introductory lectures, will be alleged in a later part of my course.

The civilization of modern Europe is in a very real sense a product of Christianity. It springs from a spiritual soil towards the preparation of which no agency made a more important contribution than the Christian Church. Yet Christianity inherited from the original Gospel of Jesus an attitude of indifference to the whole business of civilization as such which it has never—or, at any rate, never without qualms of conscience—entirely laid aside. In the Middle Ages, indeed, the Christian Church might seem to have undertaken the guidance and control of the secular life of the peoples professing Christianity as it could not have undertaken it previously to the conversion of Constantine, and as it

cannot undertake it now, when the autonomy of non-religious interests is too firmly established a principle for religious authorities effectively to dispute. Yet even in the Middle Ages monastic institutions witnessed everywhere to the primary antagonism between what the New Testament calls 'the world' and the ideals associated with the first preaching of the Founder of Christianity and his Apostles. It is true that the Reformers, in their endeavour to set up a single standard of duty for all Christians, abolished, where they had the power, institutions of this kind, whose existence rested on the recognition of a distinction within the Christian life between a lower level, of obedience to *precepts*, and a higher, of observance of *counsels of perfection*, and refused to admit the inferiority of the Christian citizen as such to the Christian ascetic. Nevertheless, the Churches of the Reformation did not in the least abandon the claim that the Christian's outlook must be focused on a transcendent order which must inevitably dwarf and render insignificant the cultivation of the good things of this life, whether these be of the higher sort, which are appreciated only by the scholar or the artist, or of the lower, which make their appeal even to those destitute of any taste for the more refined pursuits attractive to the few.

According to the Christian religion, in its Protestant as well as in its Catholic form, there was a great gulf fixed between God, in his transcendent majesty, and man, his fallen creature. Civilization was the

work of the latter; and was designed to subserve his advantage in this present life. It was not the work of God; it had no value in the life beyond. Revelation came from without, to teach man how to reconcile himself with his offended Maker, and to point him to a better world, wherein, if he were once permitted to enter it, he might receive in far fuller measure all, and more than all, that he was endeavouring by means of what we call civilization and culture —and endeavouring with but a trifling degree of success—to provide for himself in this world. No doubt Christianity taught that God's revelation of himself to man had culminated in an actual taking of human nature into personal unity with the eternal Word which was the principle of self-revelation in the Godhead. It thus proclaimed the union of God and man to be, despite the distance which man's disobedience and sin had established between them, already an accomplished fact; and participation in that union, thus once accomplished, to be possible for all men by means of faith and of sacramental incorporation into the life of him in whom it was thus already accomplished. But the Incarnation and Atonement thus proclaimed were still regarded as interventions from without. If they had issued in a dispensation which enabled the gifts—or some of the gifts—of civilization, the achievements—or some of the achievements—of culture to be used with acceptance in the service of God, this use was still of the nature of a sacrifice made of things in themselves

undivine to a Divinity which, in its absolute blessedness, needed them not and only received them as tokens of loyal homage. Nor were the Incarnation and Atonement themselves, wherein man was reconciled with God, looked upon as the crowning achievements of humanity but as the gracious condescensions of the Godhead, accomplishing in and for man what man apart from God—and the Fall, it was held, had driven him very far apart from God—could not possibly have succeeded in accomplishing.

It is hardly necessary to do more than observe—for the point is familiar to all students of the history of thought—that the great movement of the European mind which we call the Renaissance was in one, and that perhaps its most obvious aspect, a rebellion against the disparagement of civilization as such which had been so closely associated with the tradition of Christianity, and a confession of faith in values which that tradition had either denied altogether, or refused to acknowledge as having a legitimate place in this life, whatever place might be reserved for them in heaven hereafter.

But this rebellion, this confession of faith, quite naturally provoked a violent reaction on the part of the tradition which they had thus defied. Although there were, no doubt, certain aspects of the religious movement which we call the Reformation which link it closely with the Renaissance, yet upon the whole it represents, from the properly religious point of view, a reaction against it, a reassertion of the com-

parative insignificance of those values on which the Renaissance was concerned to lay especial stress. It was perfectly in accordance with the genuine affinities of ideas and tendencies that Giordano Bruno, in whom the immanentism inherent in the Renaissance view of the world first perhaps achieved an adequate philosophical expression, found himself, despite the hostility of the Roman Catholic ecclesiastical authorities which ultimately brought him to the stake, less sympathetic with the Protestants among whom he at one time took refuge from that hostility than with the Catholics from whom he had fled. For the Protestant depreciation of *works* in comparison with *faith* destroyed just the one point of contact between the older tradition of the Church and the joy of the men of the Renaissance in external beauty and splendour and power. That point of contact was to be found in the store set by medieval Catholicism, which had found its centre in the Mass, upon the external expression of devotion by magnificence in the provision of the appurtenances of worship. Under the cover of its approval of such magnificence the Catholic Church had been able to extend patronage and encouragement to the manifestation of the spirit of the Renaissance in the creation of works of art of every kind: whereas for works of art the Protestant Churches had in comparison but little use.

But the reaction of the Christian tradition of hostility or indifference to secular civilization and

culture against the spirit of the Renaissance did not limit itself to those who had broken loose from the communion of the Roman See. It found expression also in the so-called Counter-Reformation within that communion; and also in the later movement therein which goes by the name of Jansenism and was illustrated by the genius of Pascal as well as in such renewed protests within the Churches of the Reformation themselves as are associated with the Pietistic, Methodist, and Evangelical movements of the eighteenth century. Differing in many ways, these were yet all alike inspired by the sense of the inability of secular civilization to satisfy the demands of the human soul, and of the necessity laid upon men in earnest about their salvation to separate themselves from those who were content to limit their ken to the affairs of the earthly life which must end for each of us at his individual death.

It was the inevitable result of the interaction between the new faith in civilization and the old faith in a life beyond this world which dwarfed and obscured the significance of civilization that Western Christendom should in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries become, if I may so express it, *double-minded.* This process was encouraged by the fact that a new world-view had emerged from the astronomical discoveries of the fifteenth, sixteenth, and seventeenth centuries which was quite irreconcilable with that presupposed in the sacred books of Christianity. But the attempt made during this period by the majority

of educated men to hold the new convictions respecting the physical universe which were connected with the names of Copernicus, Kepler, Galileo, and Newton without abandoning their old confidence in the statements of the Bible as revelations dictated by Omniscience was only an instance and a symbol of a discord which reached farther and deeper, and penetrated into every sphere of human life, even where particular individuals were quite at rest in their own minds and could contentedly acquiesce in some provisional synthesis between their religious faith and their secular outlook.

The next great movement of European thought was that which may perhaps be most comprehensively described as the Romantic Movement, the heyday of which immediately preceded the period with which we shall be occupied, so far as regards England, in this course of lectures. It may, I think, be fairly characterized as a movement aiming at the abolition of the necessity for such *double-mindedness* as that of which I have just been speaking by the discovery *within* civilization of the values which the religious tradition had affirmed to exist *outside* of it, in *another* world, in comparison wherewith *this* world, with its civilization, is a merely transitory and relatively unimportant phenomenon. In other words it was a movement, so far as theology or the philosophy of religion is concerned, in the direction of *immanentism*.

What were the philosophical foundations of this movement? Within my present limits they can only

be very summarily indicated. I will indicate them by means of a reference to four great names of European significance.[1]

The first of these in chronological order is that of Spinoza. The great Jewish thinker was by the majority of religious people in his own and the next age regarded as an atheist. To illustrate this from English literature, we find even so liberal-minded a philosopher as Locke[2] speaking of his 'justly-decried name'. Later still, Hume[3] could describe, not perhaps without irony, but yet with the expectation of being taken by the ordinary reader as expressing a recognized truth, the doctrine advanced by Spinoza[4] that human minds are a part of the infinite understanding of God as a 'hideous hypothesis'. But the time was at hand when this judgement was to be called in question. The teaching of Spinoza that 'whatever is, is in God' (*Quicquid est, in Deo est*),[5] was to be seized upon as pointing the way to a healing of the discord introduced into our view of life and of reality by belief in a God with a supernatural world of his own other than that which men of science explore and wherein we seek to create for

[1] I do not suggest that other names might not be mentioned no less important in this respect. That of Rousseau, for example, is certainly one such.

[2] *Reply to the Bishop of Worcester's Answer to his Second Letter* (1699), p. 422.

[3] *Treatise on Human Nature*, part iv, Sect. 5; ed. Selby-Bigge, p. 241.

[4] *Ethica*, ii. 11.

[5] Ibid. i. 15.

our own peace and comfort a social and political order. The most influential theologian of the early nineteenth century, Schleiermacher, was to give utterance[1] to a passionate reverence for him who had so long passed as the prince of atheists, the 'holy, neglected Spinoza', whose only love had been the universe which, as envisaged in its eternal essence, he had called indifferently Nature or God.

The second name which I shall associate with the movement of which I am speaking is that of Kant. Kant himself was neither Romantic nor Spinozist, and only in his declining days, after the appearance of the last book of his published in his lifetime, does he show, in the fragments now known as his *Opus postumum*, some trace of the influence of the contemporary current of thought and feeling which was by then setting so strongly in his own country towards the immanentism of which Spinoza had been the prophet. Nevertheless, by his drastic criticisms of the arguments whereby in the preceding age philosophers and theologians had attempted to prove that the world which physical science devoted itself to exploring implied the existence of a transcendent Deity, to whom might then be attributed the revelation of another world contained, as was supposed, in the Christian Scriptures, he himself had thrown doubt upon the genuine reality of that other world. For, according to his 'critical' philosophy, our cognitive faculties are incompetent to

[1] *Reden über die Religion*, ii (2^te^ Aufl., ed. 1880, p. 38).

explore any world but that to which alone they are adapted, the 'phenomenal' world in space and time; so that no eternal or infinite Being can be by them presented to us as a possible object of experience. The drift towards immanentism was thus unquestionably quickened by the profound impression made upon thinking men by Kant's attack on all transcendent metaphysics.

The third of my four names is that of Goethe. This great poet welcomed in Spinoza a philosopher after his own heart, and himself expressed in many works of imagination his deep sense of the organic unity of all reality and of the importance of seeking and finding *here* that which it is vain to suppose is only waiting for us in some other world than this. *Hier oder nirgend ist Amerika.*[1]

The thought so powerfully presented by Goethe was worked out by the idealistic philosophy which arose in Germany after the time of Kant and which culminated in Hegel, whose name is the last of the four which I promised to mention. Kant had represented the Infinite, the Eternal, the Absolute as *limits*, short of attaining to which we could never be content to cease from pursuing our quest of an explanation of the finite, temporal, relative phenomena which surround us; yet limits to which we could never hope, owing to the constitution of our minds, actually to attain. Hegel, on the other hand, attempted to represent the Infinite, the Eternal, the

[1] *Wilhelm Meisters Lehrjahre*, vii. 3.

Absolute as in fact already present within our experience, expressing themselves through the whole gamut of the manifold forms of being which our life, individual and social, offers to our inspection. So too, by Hegel, our reason is no longer described, as it was described by Kant, as fashioning for itself such a more or less erroneous image as it can of a transcendent Reality, which is in its own nature incomprehensible by us; but rather as itself the process whereby that Reality is for ever coming to the knowledge of itself, so that what we apprehend by our thinking is not something quite other than our minds that apprehend it, but their very substance; while, conversely, our apprehension of it is not something quite other than itself, but as it were its own self-reflection.

This whole movement of which I have been speaking had of course affected religious thought in England before 1850; but far less than it had affected it in the country to which belong three out of the four men whose names I have associated with it. Its chief representatives in England had been Coleridge[1] and Carlyle. By 1850 Coleridge had been nearly twenty years dead; but his had been, as John Stuart Mill said,[2] one of the 'seminal minds in England in their age', and his influence was very much alive among those who stood in the front rank of religious

[1] B. 1771; d. 1832.

[2] 'Bentham' in *London and Westminster Review*, Aug. 1838 (*Dissertations and Discussions*, i, p. 331).

teachers in England at that date. Carlyle, who was twenty-four years his junior, was then at the height of his powers, and there was perhaps no one during the next three or four decades who exerted a stronger influence on the religious thought of the more intelligent of his compatriots. Perhaps neither of these two great men represented the movement of which they were the exponents in a form calculated to bring out into full relief the theological immanentism which was implicit in it. Addressing themselves as they did to a public distrustful of any philosophy which professed to derive knowledge from any other source than the senses and full of faith in the power which the ever-increasing knowledge of the laws of physical nature might be expected to bestow on the human race, to be used in the amelioration of its material conditions, they were inevitably more concerned to insist upon the reality of something beyond physical nature and material conditions and beyond a civilization based solely upon these than to emphasize the immanence of God in the actual life of men. Coleridge, although his unorthodoxy on certain points might render him suspect to rigorists in theological doctrine, regarded himself as a champion of the traditional creed, and his influence told strongly in its support. Carlyle, while more out of sympathy than the older writer with the details of that creed, and contemptuous of the intellectual dishonesty, as it seemed to him, involved in Coleridge's patronage of its preachers, yet powerfully

reinforced its moral appeal; while, despite his habitual glorification of Goethe as the spiritual hero of a new age, he certainly left upon his readers the impression that he was rather a prophetic critic of the actual civilization of his day than one to whom that civilization was, as obviously it was to Goethe and to Hegel, the manifestation in time of the activity of the eternal Divine Spirit.

The year 1850 saw the death of William Wordsworth.[1] Through his close friendship with Coleridge, in conjunction with whom he had published before the end of the eighteenth century[2] the famous *Lyrical Ballads*, the appearance of which marks an epoch in the history of English poetical literature, this great poet may be said to have been to some slight degree in contact with the philosophical movement in Germany of which I have just been speaking; yet it would be a mistake to suppose that he owed any considerable debt to it. His poetry, however, unquestionably assisted in impressing upon the minds of Englishmen the thought of divine immanence in nature. There is perhaps no more sublime expression of this thought than the well-known passage from the *Lines composed a few miles above Tintern Abbey* which speak of

> A presence that disturbs me with the joy
> Of elevated thoughts; a sense sublime
> Of something far more deeply interfused,
> Whose dwelling is the light of setting suns,

[1] B. 1770. [2] In 1798.

> And the round ocean and the living air,
> And the blue sky, and in the mind of man;
> A motion and a spirit, that impels
> All thinking things, all objects of all thought,
> And rolls through all things.

But the contrast between nature and the civilization of cities and crowds from which Wordsworth deliberately withdrew to his native lakes and mountains was too marked a feature of the teaching implied in his interpretation of the former to encourage to any great extent a tendency towards a general immanentism in theology. Moreover, his personal adhesion to orthodox standards in his practice and, for the most part, in his explicit treatment of religious tradition was bound to counteract the effect of much in some of his greatest poems that might otherwise have made in that direction.

Nevertheless, although the drift towards such an immanentism may have been—indeed certainly was—less marked in English than in German thought, there was in the middle of the nineteenth century a genuine movement thitherward at work there also.

B. THE SITUATION IN ENGLAND

It has already been observed that the advance of natural science, especially of biology, was bound to suggest objections to the established teleology. According to that teleology a transcendent Creator had designed, after the manner of a human mechanician, the wonderful adaptation to their circumstances and

environment which is evinced by the structure of organic beings. Difficulties in this view had been already pointed out in the preceding century by the acute mind of a British philosopher, David Hume, and afterwards in Germany with more effect, though with far less elegance, by Kant. Thus attempts to conceive an immanent rather than an external design or purpose in organic nature, and ultimately in nature as a whole, were bound to be made to meet these difficulties. It was characteristic, I think, of the difference between the national mentalities that English immanentism may be said to have been primarily the thought of immanence in *nature*—which found, as we have seen, expression not only in the works of theologians and philosophers, but in the poetry of Wordsworth (as also in that of Shelley[1]); while German immanentism was all along more comprehensive, less exclusively based on *natural* science and less afraid of 'pantheism'. For—despite Carlyle's jesting retort when asked if the doctrine which he was preaching were not pantheism: 'Suppose it were pot-theism?—if the thing is true!'[2]—the very hint of pantheism aroused a certain nervousness in the English mind, the native sobriety of which instinctively dreaded what seemed to be an extravagant mysticism, threatening the sense of distinction between the worshipper and his God.

It is no new observation that an interest—it might seem in the eyes of some a disproportionate interest—

[1] B. 1792; d. 1822. [2] *Life of John Sterling*, part ii, c. 3.

in morality rather than in the other great provinces of the spiritual life of man, in either truth or beauty, is characteristic of the English mentality. The fact is witnessed to not only by the extraordinary output of works on moral philosophy which distinguished Britain during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries but by (what is more relevant to our present purpose) the prevalent attitude of Englishmen towards religion.[1] The celebrated definition of religion by the poet and essayist Matthew Arnold[2] in his *Literature and Dogma*[3] as 'morality touched by emotion', whatever may be its defects as a definition, is distinctively English. Nor is it merely on account of its identification in their minds with what is construed as an extravagant mysticism that Englishmen are apt, as I have already remarked, to find 'pantheism' uncongenial; it is probably, at least among the more thoughtful, on account of the moral dangers historically associated with it. It was mainly on this ground that the late Hastings Rashdall,[4] whose mind was typically English, emphatically declined, despite his thorough-going acceptance of idealism as a theory of knowledge, to follow those with whom he was so far in agreement into any developments which seemed to him to tend in a pantheistic direction.

Immanentism need not indeed be in a strict sense pantheism; but the feature of pantheism which

[1] Cp. the present writer's 'Morality and Religion' (in *A Century of Anglican Theology and other Lectures*, 1923).

[2] B. 1822; d. 1888. [3] 1873. [4] B. 1858; d. 1924.

specially excites the suspicions of moralists, its suggestion that God may be manifested not only in good actions and in good characters, but in evil actions and evil characters also, is a feature of all immanentism. No one could, however, possibly hold that Carlyle's teaching, whatever else may be said of it, blurred the distinction between right and wrong;[1] and of the most prominent of the British thinkers of the period which we are now considering there was not one but was profoundly convinced not only of the momentous importance of that distinction but even of the general correctness of the traditional rules of conduct which were prescribed by the Christian Church. Here or there there might be a variation of emphasis. In the case of the Utilitarians in particular, this might even become a subject of controversy between them and the defenders of a different ethical principle; but, after all, the morality presented by John Stuart Mill in his published writings as that best adapted to contribute to the greatest happiness of the greatest number, in quality as well as quantity, was at once recognizable as on the whole the morality which Englishmen of all schools were prepared to recommend. Indeed that he was

[1] Carlyle has been with some plausibility accused of teaching, in his glorification of some of his 'heroes', that might is right. But even here he is not departing from his conviction of an infinite difference between right and wrong: he is, at most, contending that, in a world governed by God, success may be taken as indicating that he who succeeds has more accurately perceived what *is* right under the circumstances.

conscious of having no real quarrel with Christianity as regards the content of morality is shown by the often quoted sentences in the latest of his writings, his *Essay on Theism*, concerning Christ. 'Religion', he says there, 'cannot be said to have made a bad choice in pitching on this man as the ideal representative and guide of humanity; nor even now would it be easy, even for an unbeliever, to find a better translation of the rule of virtue from the abstract into the concrete, than to endeavour so to live that Christ would approve our life.'

Matthew Arnold again was the apostle of what he called 'culture',[1] and insisted that the 'Hebraic' morality which the English middle class has derived from the Bible as interpreted by the Puritans should be supplemented by an 'Hellenic' respect for beauty and knowledge. Nevertheless, he too affirmed that 'conduct', the ordering of which was in his opinion best learned from the Bible, was, though not the whole, yet 'three-fourths of life'.[2] Both in him and in John Ruskin,[3] whose ethical teaching was conveyed at first through a criticism of the arts of architecture, painting, and sculpture, and in his later years also through a polemic against the current economic

[1] The sense in which this word (largely in consequence of its use by Arnold) is employed in England is not quite the same as that of the German *Kultur*. It has, we may say, a more *aesthetic* tinge. English comments during the World War on certain German pronouncements are to be understood in the light of this difference.

[2] *Culture and Anarchy*, 1869.

[3] B. 1819; d. 1900.

doctrine which treated morality as irrelevant to the science of the production and distribution of material wealth, we have moralists with whose codes or with the illustration of these by the main tenor of their lives, no orthodox preacher could quarrel.

Much the same may be said of a celebrated novelist whose interest in moral and religious questions gave to her works the character of contributions to the religious thought of her time. I refer to Mary Ann Evans,[1] who wrote under the pen-name of 'George Eliot'. It is true that her connexion with the philosophical essayist George Henry Lewes[2] was irregular; his wife, who lived apart from him, being still alive. But 'George Eliot' bore in society the title of his wife and was treated as such even by the sons of her husband and his lawful partner. Her conduct in uniting herself with Lewes might plausibly be regarded as a resolution to act in a hard case as if a quite defensible modification of the divorce law then in force had actually been introduced. It might be looked upon as evidence of insufficient respect for the established code, but hardly of moral laxity; to which her writings gave no sort of sanction. It is indeed probable that she herself, while satisfied that she had done right in becoming Lewes's companion, regretted the necessity of even seeming to defy a law the sanctity of which she had no desire to impair; and when, after Lewes's death, she became the wife

[1] B. 1819; d. 1880.

[2] B. 1817; d. 1878.

of J. W. Cross,[1] it was by a ceremony not only legal but religious.

It is even amusing to observe how entirely George Eliot's friend Herbert Spencer, in his discussion of ethical questions[2] which he no doubt believed himself to be treating with complete scientific freedom, fails to display the slightest interest in any moral problems which lay beyond the ken of the English *bourgeoisie* of his generation; while on those of which, falling within that ken, he does take cognizance, his judgement does not, in any important particular, differ from that of the maintainers of the Protestant variety of the orthodox tradition, which he followed, as against the Catholic, in acknowledging no merit in a professionally ascetic life.

Moreover, when, after the period of the dominance of the general type of thought represented by Mill and Spencer, a philosophy of a quite different kind, inspired by the study of Kant and Hegel, began to make its way in England, the earlier teachers of this new school, such as Thomas Hill Green[3] and Edward Caird,[4] were faithful to the same tradition. They questioned not the soundness of the accepted moral code, but only the possibility of justifying it on the

[1] He published in 1884 his wife's *Life* as told in her letters and journals.

[2] *Principles of Ethics*, 1879–93. See especially Part II, 'The Inductions of Ethics.'

[3] B. 1836; d. 1882. Professor of Moral Philosophy at Oxford.

[4] B. 1835; d. 1908. Professor of Moral Philosophy at Glasgow and Master of Balliol College, Oxford.

utilitarian and evolutionary theories of the nature of morality which were in vogue. If in Francis Herbert Bradley's[1] *Ethical Studies*, published in 1876, some disturbing reflections on the transcendence of morality by religion at length appeared, yet neither he nor Bernard Bosanquet,[2] his eminent fellow exponent of an absolute idealism which did not allow to moral distinctions an ultimate metaphysical validity, exhibited the slightest tendency to a revision of the moral values generally acknowledged among their countrymen.

Consequently the advance of immanentism, while it might alarm those who shrank from any free handling or criticism of traditional dogmas, for a long while seemed innocent of any tendency to endanger those ethical principles which it was characteristic of the rational way of thinking to regard as the most substantial and most widely acknowledged part of religion, in affording security to which lay the undeniable value of the rest. It was not until a comparatively recent date—one may assign roughly that of the beginning of the present century—that the advance in question which we have seen taking place all along the line can be said to have been effectively checked. The check may, I think, be considered as coming from three distinct quarters.

It came in the first place from those who were led to challenge the claim of *naturalism*, that is to say, of

[1] B. 1846; d. 1924. Fellow of Merton College, Oxford.

[2] B. 1848; d. 1923. Professor of Moral Philosophy at St. Andrews, 1903–8. Cp. *The Hibbert Journal*, Oct. 1923, p. 86.

a theory of the universe based solely or chiefly upon *natural* science, to afford an adequate basis for the spiritual qualities which a majority of the defenders of naturalism had agreed with its adversaries in recognizing. It came also from others who were prepared to assert that the new idealism, which during the last quarter of the nineteenth century had in the academic world succeeded to a considerable extent in ousting the empiricism and naturalism which it had found in possession of the field, had itself no right to pose as the vindicator of religion, since it had sacrificed to the principle of immanentism the essential article of real personality in God and in man. It came lastly from those who, taking seriously the call to 'self-realization' which came from the representatives of this very idealism, were not prepared to limit their response to that call by the precepts of a code which could no longer appeal to a transcendent divine authority but was left destitute, so to say, of supernatural assistance against the attacks of such revolutionary spirits as Nietzsche in Germany and others nearer at hand who were proposing a radical revision of traditional estimates and rules of conduct.

Before, however, going on to enlarge this brief account of the causes tending at the beginning of the twentieth century to check that advance of immanentism in English religious thought which had characterized the second half of the nineteenth, it may be desirable to point out that this immanentism itself had taken more than one form.

The first such form was *naturalism.* It might indeed be objected to this statement that naturalism cannot be regarded as a doctrine of *divine* immanence. Yet, so long as it is asserted on its behalf that the values which it is considered to be the principal function of religion to maintain are sufficiently provided for in a naturalistic view of life, it may be not improperly so described. For it may be contended that it differs from the traditional religious view principally by its claim to dispense with the belief in a transcendent Deity without robbing human life of those nobler features which have been held to require for their explanation the existence of such a Deity. The acceptance of such a claim as justified might well seem tantamount to a belief in an immanent source of these excellences which would possess some, at any rate, of the attributes of the supposed transcendent Deity which it had replaced. Could it be held, for example, that a morality not less high than that inculcated by Christianity is amply warranted by a purely evolutionary theory of the origin of the human spirit, persons temperamentally religious would be led to make of the Power manifested in the evolution of humanity something practically equivalent to an immanent God.

But such criticism as was levelled for example by Arthur James Balfour, afterwards Earl of Balfour,[1] against the sufficiency of naturalism to account for morality, for the love of beauty, for the very

[1] B. 1848; d. 1930.

pursuit of natural science itself, tended to check the advance of a theological or quasi-theological immanentism based upon naturalistic premises. For it suggested that something beyond and outside of the processes of which the natural sciences can take cognizance is required to give meaning and sanction to those principles of action which it had formerly been usual to represent as based on commands of a transcendent Author of nature and upon which no small part of what we generally understand by civilization has always depended. It is to be noted that in the last decade of the nineteenth century the criticism of naturalism on these lines received reinforcement from an unexpected quarter in the frank admission made by the great champion of agnostic naturalism, Thomas Henry Huxley,[1] in his Romanes Lecture on *Evolution and Ethics*, delivered at Oxford in 1893, that the ethical development of human nature—which no one valued more highly than he—involved a deliberate attempt on the part of man to move in a direction contrary to the course so far followed by the process of evolution which had brought the human species itself into being.

But, if naturalism may thus be allowed to rank as a form of immanentism, it was by no means the only one which was at work as the nineteenth century drew to its close. The idealism which during the last quarter of that century had won its way to supremacy, not indeed in popular thought, but in the

[1] B. 1825; d. 1895.

circles professionally devoted to the study of philosophy, found naturalism inadequate to account for our experience as a whole precisely because it ignored or denied the truth that, apart from a spiritual factor which could not itself be resolved into a product of sensation or of the kind of reality that the senses could apprehend, the existence of science itself was inexplicable; not to speak of the existence of morality and of the appreciation of beauty in nature and in art, features of our experience which the exponents of naturalism professed to value no less highly than did their critics. So far the treatment of naturalism by the idealists was on the same lines as that illustrated by the work of Balfour. They were not, however, like Balfour, ready to call in once more a transcendent God to account for the facts which naturalism could not, on its own principles, explain. They preferred to accuse naturalism of taking an abstraction, necessary perhaps for the immediate purposes of the departmental sciences, to be identical with the concrete Reality which manifests itself to us not only through the channels to which natural science is inevitably confined, but also through what comes to us in aesthetic, moral, and religious experience, yet is not on that account any less an authentic revelation of the one Reality than what is given to us in natural science itself. Idealism, then, is a *conscious* immanentism, in the sense that it does not content itself with declaring, as did the 'agnosticism' of the mid-nineteenth century, that we

have no proof of the existence of a transcendent God, but can get on sufficiently well without troubling ourselves about the question whether such a God exist or no. It definitely claims to retain all that men have valued in what they took for communion with a transcendent God, while translating it into terms which recognize that the dwelling of God is not without but within the system of which only by using a mythological phrase can we call him the Creator, since he is rather the immanent Principle of its being, through the recognition of which alone it is ultimately intelligible.

The attack on this position came from those who felt that religion or, at any rate, the Christian religion, (even in its least dogmatic form, as held by Unitarians) was bound up with belief in a real personality both in God and in man; and that this belief was undermined by absolute idealism. This danger thus threatened to the belief in question was detected by some in that philosophy even as it was represented in the works of Green; for example by Andrew Seth (afterwards A. S. Pringle-Pattison)[1] in his notable books *Scottish Philosophy* and *Hegelianism and Personality*. But it was accentuated when the later masters of this school, Bradley and Bosanquet, expressly denied personality to the Absolute. Of these two thinkers Bradley held that any God with whom his worshippers could stand in a personal relation, must be regarded, from the point of view of metaphysics, not

[1] B. 1856; d. 1931.

as *reality*, but as *appearance*; while Bosanquet, sharing this view, went on to affirm that the finite personality of individual human beings—and no personality could be other than finite—was to be considered not as substantial, but as *adjectival*. One important result of the controversy which was carried on in the interest of religion against the disparagement of personality by absolute idealism was to bring the question which it raised of the nature and status of personality to the forefront of philosophico-theological discussion, where indeed it may perhaps be said still to remain.

It remains to speak of the last of the three quarters from which I said that there came about the beginning of the present century a check to the advance of immanentism in English religious thought. The first and second of the influences making for such a check were on the whole what may be called academic influences, proceeding from those few persons who deliberately occupy themselves with the study of the philosophy of religion. The source of the third influence which was telling in the same direction was, on the other hand, a movement of unrest passing over English society as a whole, and finding expression rather in general literature than in academic discussion; though it no doubt owed something to the theories and discoveries of contemporary thinkers and scholars.

The scrupulous propriety, not to say the prudery, of the Victorian age in England has become a

proverb with the present generation of Englishmen. There is much exaggeration and misunderstanding in the now current conception of 'Victorianism'; yet it is true that the middle years of Queen Victoria's long reign were marked by a general acquiescence in the obligation of the moral code of Christendom which extended even to the most prominent critics of its theological creed; by a general respect for institutional religion, showing itself preeminently in the public and social observance of Sunday as a day of attendance at church and of abstinence not only from ordinary business but from ordinary pleasures; and by a general reticence in regard to matters of sex perhaps unparalleled at any other epoch, a reticence which extended even to the great works of imagination whereof not a few appeared in the course of the period. The age was not indeed, as it is often supposed to have been, a self-complacent, unquestioning age. On the contrary, it was a time of widespread doubt and inquiry and of adventurous discovery in many fields; but what I have said above was, I think, true of it, and, this being so, it was to be expected that it would be followed by a reaction, when the spirit of inquiry which was already abroad should have been let loose in the field of ethics, from which for what may seem a surprisingly long time it had kept on the whole aloof.

This reaction, although it was, as I have already remarked, rather the result of a general movement

of spiritual unrest in the community than a product of the study or the laboratory, was yet by no means unaffected by what was going on among scholars and men of science. In particular it was undoubtedly encouraged by those inquiries into the institutions and customs of uncivilized and primitive peoples which have appropriated to themselves the name of anthropology. The use of this word in this reference may perhaps be with reason considered as begging the question which the ancient definition of man as a rational animal had answered in a different sense. For it seems to suggest that the genuine science of human nature is that which is occupied in the main not with the achievements of the most highly educated and cultivated portion of the human species but with the dim gropings and dreams of a less advanced stage of its development. But, however this may be, the usage is now well established by which the term 'anthropology' denotes that modern study of primitive culture, of which the patriarch was an Englishman, Edward Burnett Tylor,[1] and one of the most eminent promoters another Englishman, who is still with us, Sir James Frazer,[2] the celebrated author of *The Golden Bough*.[3] The researches of these men and of their fellow workers tended to shake the dominion of the traditional code of conduct over the minds of men, even

[1] B. 1832; d. 1917. Professor of Anthropology, Oxford.
[2] B. 1854.
[3] 1st ed. (in 2 vols.) 1890; 3rd ed. (in 12 vols.), 1910–15.

though this result was by no means intended or desired by the chief of those who carried them on. For they unveiled the historical antecedents of that code and showed how on the one hand rules which in our eyes possess no rational justification seem to wear or to have worn for others just such a halo of sanctity as had long invested, in the eyes of ordinary Englishmen, the provisions of the Decalogue in Exodus; while, on the other hand, not a little light was thrown on many rules and customs prevalent among ourselves by a comparison with those belonging to the 'lower culture'; and it was thus suggested that our rules and customs are perchance to be understood as survivals of such, explicable rather by the conditions obtaining in a primitive or barbarous society than by those appropriate to our own level of civilization. The phrase *taboo*, borrowed from a Polynesian dialect to express a prohibition resting not on reason but on custom, was extended to cover all prohibitions which claimed observance on the ground of authority, and disobedience to which created a peculiar sense of horror and repugnance, measured not by the consideration of its material consequences, but by the shock given to what may be best and most intelligibly called the *religious* sentiment of the community. Men asked themselves whether rules regarded in England or in Christendom at large as sacred might after all be no better than *taboos* which, if looked upon with eyes as unfamiliar as those with which we survey the

manners of contemporary savages or of the ancient tribes whose strange ways aroused the curiosity of an Herodotus or a Pausanias, would appear no less grotesque and absurd than these are wont to appear to ourselves. Thus there arose an inclination to call in question the right of the hitherto recognized code of conduct to restrain men in that *self-realization* wherein an immanentist moral philosophy was accustomed to place the supreme end of human life, even when it went on (as it commonly did) to distinguish among the capacities and potentialities of the self between those whose fulfilment was and those whose fulfilment was not compatible with the realization of the self as a whole.

Such an inclination was already evident in English society before the World War of 1914–18. But it inevitably received a great impulse from that enormous upheaval. For this shook as nothing else could have shaken the authority of use and wont in the minds of multitudes of men who suddenly found presented to them as sacred duties the performance of acts and the indulgence of sentiments quite the reverse of those which they had hitherto been trained to approve and to cultivate; and themselves flung into the midst of surroundings wholly other than those presupposed by the rules of conduct upon the obligatoriness of which the tradition of the peaceful and settled society in which they had been bred was accustomed to insist.

Such complacency as had been felt in the progress

of civilization as an undoubted fact in which one could rejoice and on whose continuance one could rely, without needing to look beyond into insoluble mysteries lying outside of the world of our daily experience, was shattered in the public mind by the War. Doctrines which were believed, rightly or wrongly, to involve such complacency—faith in the necessarily beneficial effects of scientific knowledge, faith in the actual course of the world as being, to use a figure which Carlyle borrowed from the Earth Spirit's speech in Goethe's *Faust*,[1] the outward garment whereby we behold the immanent God—fell into discredit with many who were disillusioned by the outbreak of passions which it had been hoped were moribund and who felt it impossible any longer to entertain the easy optimism which had been ready to accept such beliefs without too curious a scrutiny, on the authority of the leaders of contemporary thought. This state of mind again produced in some who shared it a revived understanding of and sympathy with older forms of religion which, being pessimistic concerning the present world and expectant of a catastrophic judgement from without to be executed by an angry God upon the crying sins of men, had sought for a Saviour in whom to find refuge from the miseries of an order doomed to destruction.

Such a resuscitation of a religious outlook dia-

[1] *Faust*, Part I, quoted by Carlyle, *Sartor Resartus*, Bk. I, Ch. 8.

metrically opposed to the long dominant immanentism might, one might surmise, have been in any case among the consequences of the War; but its way had been strangely prepared by the conviction, which during the preceding twenty years had been growing among scholars, that the Christ of the Gospels had been misrepresented by the Liberal Protestantism which had made of him a prophet of modern civilization, and that he was only to be rightly understood by those who were prepared to take seriously, even if not in the letter, that eschatological teaching which is so prominent in the evangelical record and was so obviously at the centre of the faith of his earliest followers.

We thus arrive at the present situation which, as I read it, is marked by a revolt against the immanentism of yesterday and demands from the theologians of to-morrow such a full consideration of the contrasted claims of *transcendence* and *immanence* to colour our thought of God as may lead to a revised view of the mutual relations of religion and civilization. For it is difficult to be satisfied either with the older Christian tradition which opposed them the one to the other or with the immanentism which since the period of the Renaissance has been continually moving towards the position expressed in a saying of Turgenieff, with which one of the foremost English philosophers of the last generation, the late Bernard Bosanquet, at one time professed himself to be content as a statement of his own religious

faith: 'I believe in civilization and I require no further creed.'[1]

The following lectures will be devoted to illustrating this general sketch of the history of religious thought in England during the last eighty years by a more detailed study of some part of the theological, philosophical, and general literature of the period.

[1] Quoted in *The Civilisation of Christendom and Other Studies* (1893), p. 63. But see for Bosanquet's final attitude the present writer's article on 'Bernard Bosanquet's Philosophy of Religion' in the *Hibbert Journal* for October 1923.

III

BIBLICAL CRITICISM AND ITS EFFECTS ON RELIGIOUS THOUGHT

AMONG the poets who were writing in England during the earlier part of the period with which we are now concerned there were two who, whatever judgement posterity may eventually pronounce upon their work, undoubtedly stood out in the estimation of their contemporaries above all the rest. These were Alfred Tennyson, to whom I have already referred,[1] and Robert Browning.[2] Although separated in age from one another by no more than three years, Tennyson having been born in 1809, the year which also saw the births of Darwin and of Gladstone,[3] and Browning in 1812, in the same year with the great novelist Charles Dickens,[4] the elder poet was famous long before the younger, whose verse was at once more difficult and less melodious. Both, however, although alike in little else, were at one in their moral and religious outlook, their profound faith in a divine goodness from which the universe has taken its beginning, and of whose ultimate triumph it is destined to be the scene; both were agreed in a passionate conviction that this interpretation of experience involves as its inseparable condition a belief in the immortality of individual

[1] See above, p. 13.
[2] B. 1812, d. 1889.
[3] The famous statesman: d. 1898.
[4] D. 1870.

human souls. The influence of both upon their generation was thus in the direction of strengthening the hold upon it of the general moral and religious tradition of Christianity even though some of the doctrines taught in the churches might be by them criticized or rejected.

I shall begin my more detailed account of the vicissitudes of religious thought in England from 1850 onwards by quoting a remarkable poem by the second of the two poets whom I have mentioned; a poem which was included in a volume called *Dramatis Personæ*, published by him in the year 1864, fourteen years after the date which I have chosen to be the starting-point of my survey. The poem is called *Gold Hair, a Story of Pornic* (in Brittany). It tells how a young and beautiful girl 'who lived at Pornic, down by the sea,' requested, when dying, that her abundant golden hair might, when she was laid in the grave, be left as it was. So it remained

> curled around her brow, like a crown,
> And coiled beside her cheeks, like a cap,
> And calmed about her neck—ay down
> To her breast, pressed flat, without a gap
> I' the gold, it reached her gown.

Years afterwards, so went the tale, during repairs in the pavement of the church, the grave was found, and

> there lay the girl's skull, wedged amid
> A mint of money it served for the nonce
> To hold in its hair-heaps hid!

It is for the sake of the lines in which, at the end of all, Browning points the moral of the story, that I now quote this poem.

Why I deliver this horrible verse?
As the text of a sermon which now I preach:
Evil or good may be better or worse
In the human heart, but the mixture of each
Is a marvel and a curse.

The candid incline to surmise of late
That the Christian faith proves false, I find;
For our Essays-and-Reviews' debate
Begins to tell on the public mind,
And Colenso's words have weight:

I still, to suppose it true, for my part,
See reasons and reasons; this, to begin:
'Tis the faith that launched point-blank her dart
At the head of a lie—taught Original Sin,
The Corruption of Man's Heart.

The first thing to which I wish to call attention in these lines is the reference made in them by Browning to two books which are of considerable importance in the history of English religious thought. This importance belongs to them less on account of any profundity or even novelty in the ideas which were expressed in them than because they marked a stage on the way to the abandonment of the assumption which I reckoned as the third of those which English theologians were apt to make in the period preceding that with which we are now concerned. The assumption in question is that in Scripture we have

a revelation from God of such authority that even on matters belonging to the sphere of the natural sciences or of history its statements cannot be allowed to be incorrect without thereby impairing the claim of the whole to be, in the phrase hallowed by tradition, 'the Word of God'.

To these books I will return later. But the allusion to them is not the only feature of the passage quoted from Browning's poem which qualifies it to serve as a text for my account of religious thought in England at the time when it was written. It is in the second place to be remarked that the poet himself, though assuredly no timid traditionalist, implies that he has no sympathy with the pioneers of Biblical criticism to whom he refers. The reason of this lack of sympathy appears to be that he sees as it were behind the doubt which they cast on the historical value of the Scriptural account of human origins the spectre of what I may perhaps describe as an irreligious optimism.

No doubt such an optimism was implicit in the thought of the age. It was restive under the traditional notion of a God who revealed himself mainly through miraculous interventions in the course of nature and of history and through oracles the obvious sense of which was frequently discordant with the results of inquiry pursued according to the methods elsewhere increasingly acknowledged as valid. It was seeking rather for a God immanent in the laws of the physical universe and in the process of human

civilization. We must, moreover, not overlook the poet's assumption that the doctrine of original sin, the truth of which seemed to him (as it had seemed to Kant) to be, on any candid survey of human life as a whole, confirmed by undeniable facts of experience, was so closely bound up with the mythological account of the fall of man contained in the book of Genesis that any attack on the historicity of that account could only be understood as aimed at the profound dogma which was in the popular mind so intimately associated with it. It is plain that to Browning the vindication of the doctrine of original sin is indefinitely more important than the critical examination of the legends supposed to afford an explanation of the facts which suggested or supported it. Thus his insight into the significance of the doctrine made him apparently insensible to the importance of the movement of which the writers of the *Essays and Reviews* and Bishop Colenso[1] were the advance guard; while it foreshadowed the part which his own works were to play in inspiring many of those who in a later generation were to defend the Christian dogmas on philosophical grounds both among the British idealists who had found a master in Hegel[2] and in the theologians of the school whereof *Lux Mundi* was the manifesto.[3]

At the time of which I am now speaking, however, Browning had not come to possess the influence over

[1] See below, p. 75. [2] See Lecture V.
[3] See below, p. 73.

the minds of his more thoughtful countrymen which he was destined at a later date to exert. But the lines which I have quoted from him indicate his interest in and his understanding of the movements which were taking place in the theological world of the period at which they were written.

It was a period characterized by great intellectual activity and that of a kind calculated profoundly to disturb and unsettle religious convictions. In the University of Oxford (if I may speak especially of the manifestations of the spirit of the age in surroundings familiar to myself) there had set in a reaction from the overstrained excitement of the years during which the Tractarian Movement was running its course. This reaction had followed, naturally enough, upon the dramatic episode of the secession in 1845 to the Church of Rome of the most distinguished of the Tractarian leaders, John Henry Newman. To the enemies of the movement it seemed to have reached its inevitable climax and revealed its essential uncongeniality with the traditions of the national Church which it had striven to transform. Its friends, on the other hand, were for the moment discouraged and dismayed, and it needed all the unshaken steadfastness of another leader, (whose name had been by a true instinct popularly attached to its followers, though his personality excited less interest than Newman's), Edward Bouverie Pusey, to tide it over the catastrophe of Newman's defection and to carry it on to become the decisive factor in determining the

development of Anglican Christianity which we can now see it to have been. At the moment, however, in its original home at Oxford, men turned with relief from the ecclesiastical and theological controversies which had so long been occupying them to an interest in the new knowledge which had been and still was flowing in from a very different quarter during the thirty years which elapsed between 1830 and 1860.

Within this period, which is exactly bisected by the year of Newman's withdrawal from the communion of the Church of England, fell the establishment by Lyell of the uniformitarian geology,[1] the ascertainment by Joule of the mechanical equivalent of heat,[2] the researches of Faraday into the phenomena of electricity,[3] and, most momentous of all in its eventual effect on the religious outlook of the nation, the publication in 1859 of Darwin's *Origin of Species*.

Nor did Oxford escape the influence of John Stuart Mill, which was now at its height in England. His *System of Logic* had appeared in 1843; and the numerous defects of this famous book, the castigation of which has played so large a part in our later philosophical literature and in the philosophical instruction given in British seats of learning, must not obscure for us its importance in the history of English, not to say of European thought. Indeed, the fact that the subsequent progress of logical studies

[1] In his *Principles of Geology*, 1830–3.
[2] 1850.
[3] 1831–50.

among his countrymen, however much indebted it has often been for positive inspiration to German sources, has so frequently taken the form of criticism and correction of Mill is in itself a testimony to that importance. In his comprehensive, even if unsuccessful, attempt to substitute for the mere repetition of traditional formulae an adequate formulation of the processes of thought which had led to the far-reaching discoveries of contemporary natural science, Mill seemed to bring the study on its familiarity with which Oxford had for ages prided itself ('Oxford logic' is an English proverb) out of the atmosphere of the schools into the current of modern life. We must moreover bear in mind, as we are here specially concerned with *religious* thought, the association of Mill's new logic with his *ethical* teaching—a teaching which, while, as I pointed out before,[1] it was in no way revolutionary as regards the general type of conduct recommended, yet dispensed with all supernatural sanctions as unnecessary, and suggested the possibility of justifying on principles independent of religious tradition all the obligations other than that to religious observance, recognized by the conscience of the ordinary well-disposed English layman.

The reaction at Oxford from preoccupation with religious controversy toward an interest in the new knowledge of nature and in a philosophy which made no direct appeal to religious tradition was of course only a local manifestation of a tendency far

[1] Above, p. 40.

more general. Throughout the educated part of the community the impulse to fulfil the ambition professed by Bacon (whom Englishmen were in those days wont to exalt as the great representative of their nation among philosophers)[1] to control external nature to their own advantage by means of an accurate acquaintance with its processes, was carrying men forward in what we should nowadays call a *naturalistic* direction. The impulse in question had been continuously active in English thought from Bacon's own time onwards, and had not been elsewhere interrupted during the nineteenth century by such an episode of religious excitement and revival of theological interest as had marked at Oxford the year of the movement which takes its name from that university. The gradual but rapid extension of the 'reign of law', as it was called, over one region of human experience after another appeared to promise or to threaten (according to the prejudices of the observer) its further extension to the sphere of human volition, so that no room would eventually be left either for the individual freedom which seemed to be required to give meaning to responsibility for one's actions before a divine Judge, or for the operation of the grace which men had been taught to expect from a divine Saviour.

[1] Cp. Tennyson's transference to him of Dante's description of Aristotle, *il maestro di color che sanno*:

> Plato the wise, and large-brow'd Verulam,
> The first of those who know.
> (*The Palace of Art*, 1832.)

It must not, however, be forgotten that there was a strong current of thought affecting the minds of educated Englishmen during this same period other than that which was moving towards naturalism, a current setting not indeed in the reverse, but in a quite different direction. I have already[1] observed that, while not only had the political and social constitution of Great Britain escaped overthrow by the Revolution which had its beginning in France at the close of the eighteenth century, but also its intellectual constitution (if I may so speak) had not undergone any such analogous revolution as had been brought about by Kant in Germany, yet it had by no means remained unaffected by that European ferment of ideas which is most conveniently described as the Romantic Movement. Indeed it had, through the great romancer Sir Walter Scott,[2] no small share in bringing it about, and had also contributed to it in Byron[3] one of its most striking and influential personalities.

Nor, as we have seen,[4] was the idealistic philosophy which reflected that movement in the realm of thought and which culminated in the system of Hegel without effect on the intellectual development of the nation. Through the poet and metaphysician Samuel Taylor Coleridge it had already, as I have said, powerfully affected the higher minds therein long before 1850; but at that date its most influential

[1] Above, pp. 5, 33.
[2] B. 1770; d. 1832.
[3] B. 1788; d. 1824.
[4] Above, pp. 33 ff.

representative in the country was unquestionably Thomas Carlyle.

At once the friend and the critic of his younger contemporary Mill, Carlyle denounced in no measured terms the attempts of the Utilitarians and Radicals, to whose school Mill belonged, to dispense with the spiritual factor whether in individual or in social life. The triumphs of a purely materialistic natural science left him cold. He could not bring himself to be enthusiastic about any progress of civilization which should conduct man towards mere physical well-being and provide no sustenance for his hunger after a moral satisfaction which could only be found in conscious conformity with the divine will. His own theology was indeed essentially *immanentist*. To prove this it is sufficient to refer to his constant appeal to Goethe as the master to whom it behoved all to put themselves to school who were in earnest with their desire for a knowledge which should bring with it spiritual satisfaction under the conditions of the age. It *was*, however, undoubtedly a *theology*, while all that Mill and his school had to offer was what was soon to be called by the name, invented to describe his own position by the famous biologist Thomas Huxley, of *agnosticism*; the affirmation, that is to say, that there may or may not be a God, the evidence being insufficient to decide between the alternatives.[1] Carlyle believed that there was a

[1] See the account of the origin of the word in the *Oxford English Dictionary*.

God and that it was of importance so to believe. Nor, indeed, if one considers his teaching more closely, is it entirely correct to describe it without qualification as immanentist. Great as was the ascendancy of Goethe over his mind, he remained in the depths of his nature a disciple of the Scottish Calvinism in which he had been bred. The God whom he worshipped was a stern God of inflexible justice; and, like a Jewish prophet of old, he envisaged history—and he was a brilliant historian—as in the main the record of God's judgements upon men who defy or ignore his law. In a moment of doubt and gloom, looking out upon a generation which seemed to him to have forgotten the God of their fathers, he could cry about God: 'He *does* nothing!'[1]; implying in the exclamation that the world of nature and history, which, as he said, quoting Goethe, is 'the garment that we see him by',[2] was *not*, after all, a sufficient revelation for him; that he longed for some kind of divine *intervention* from without such as no one thoroughly *immanentist* in temper would have conceived as even desirable. Nevertheless, in *theory* his God was substantially the Moral Order of Fichte, though to his *imagination* still the transcendent personal King of all the earth, the God of the seventeenth-century Covenanters, under whose influence was moulded the tradition of the Church in which he was bred—a God of the Old Testament

[1] Froude, *Carlyle's Life in London*, ii. p. 260.
[2] See above, p. 54.

rather than of the New, of judgement rather than of love. Yet, by a curious inconsistency, such as is not uncommon in such matters, Carlyle had about him more than a touch of the anti-Semitic bias more frequently to be observed in the religious attitude of Germans than in that of Britons. The departure from the established orthodoxy in which he was prepared to recommend his countrymen to follow his own example he picturesquely described as an 'exodus from Houndsditch'[1] (Houndsditch being the ancient ghetto of the City of London)—an emancipation, that is to say, of the religion of Europe from its involution with the history and traditions of the Jewish people. But, though he habitually speaks with profound reverence of Jesus, 'the greatest of all Heroes'[2] as he calls him, it was not so much the superiority of the Gospel to the Law that was the ground of his disparagement of the Hebraic element in Christianity as his desire to enable Christianity to function as the soul of a civilization which was now so far removed from being Hebraic that it could boast of men like Shakespeare and Goethe as the supreme representatives of its culture. Nor was he unaffected by the tendency often apparent in German Romanticism to glorify the northern element in our spiritual inheritance at the expense of the southern—a tendency which has an obvious affinity with that to anti-Semitism.

[1] See Froude, *Carlyle's Life in London*, i. pp. 423 ff.
[2] *Heroes and Hero-worship*, Lect. I.

The influence of Carlyle was thus distinctly a *religious* influence. It was not, like that of Mill and the 'agnostics', an influence essentially non-religious, as relegating religion to the rank of, at the best, an optional luxury, necessary neither for the comprehension of the world nor yet for the conduct of life; nevertheless it was an influence making against the retention of most of those assumptions which I mentioned in my first lecture[1] as generally made by the English religious world in the earlier years of the nineteenth century.

One of these assumptions, however, Carlyle still makes; that of the supreme importance of saving one's own soul. Yet this is understood by him rather in the sense of attaining a certain moral status here and now than in that of winning happiness and escaping misery in a future life beyond the grave. In a word the theology of Carlyle was in tendency immanentist, although it was at the same time so penetrated by the Calvinistic religion which he inherited that it was possible to be profoundly influenced by Carlyle, and yet little, if at all, inclined to immanentism. There were many of whom this could be said. Such persons found in his prophetic exhortations a powerful moral stimulus; while by the 'mysticism' (as he calls it himself) which, as set forth in his *Sartor Resartus*,[2] pierced through the dark night of the 'everlasting No' into the light of faith in the indwelling of God in the universe that had

[1] See above, p. 9. [2] *Sartor Resartus*, Bk. II, Ch. 7–9.

for a while seemed to be emptied of his presence, they found themselves delivered from atheistic despair. But not a few, while thus indebted to Carlyle for assistance in combating the suggestions of unbelief, sought fuller guidance as to the details of their duty and fuller enlightenment as to the nature of God, not from him or from his German masters, but from historic Christianity. In taking this course, however, some would have shared the feeling expressed by one of Carlyle's own circle, Frederick Denison Maurice,[1] of whom I shall say more hereafter, who in 1838 told a friend 'that he had the greatest reverence for Carlyle, but that it was not reciprocal, for he is sure Carlyle thinks him a sham'.[2]

But besides those who carried a faith for which they had to thank Carlyle into the service of a tradition which he repudiated, there were others who found in the Scottish sage an inspiration capable of sustaining them while sitting loose to much which, though offered to them by the authorized teachers of the Christian Churches as an integral part of revealed religion, they found it increasingly difficult to accept without doing violence to convictions concerning the order of nature and the principles of historical criticism which men were coming to take as unquestionably valid everywhere outside of the sphere of the interpretation of Scripture.

I have already quoted[3] the testimony of the poet Browning to the stir produced by the publication of

[1] B. 1805; d. 1872. [2] *Life of F. D. Maurice*, i. p. 251.

[3] Above, p. 59.

Essays and Reviews in 1860 and by that of the *Introduction to the Pentateuch and the Book of Joshua* by John William Colenso, the first Bishop of Natal in South Africa, in 1862. The importance of these two books in the history of religious thought in England lies in their proclamation of a view of Scripture which, at the time of their publication, seemed, as put forward by ordained ministers of the national Church, nothing less than revolutionary. This view would not have excited surprise if found in the writings of opponents of orthodoxy or even of scholars unpledged to any particular position; it was in the enunciation of it by clergymen that the startling novelty lay. What is nowadays the commonplace of theological lectures, not only in the universities but in the colleges specially established for the training of candidates for the Anglican priesthood, was far from a commonplace in 1861.

In that year the writer of a notice of Bunsen's *Biblical Researches* which was included among the *Essays and Reviews*, a certain Rowland Williams,[1] was actually indicted for heresy by the bishop of his diocese[2] before the Court of Arches, the ancient tribunal of the ecclesiastical province of Canterbury, for denying that the Bible is properly the Word of God. He was even condemned in that court, but the decision was reversed on appeal to the Judicial

[1] B. 1817; d. 1870. He was, unlike the majority of his collaborators, a member of the University of Cambridge.

[2] Walter Kerr Hamilton, Bishop of Salisbury.

Committee of the Privy Council. In the essay which was the ground of this prosecution, Williams had said that the command to sacrifice his son Isaac, which Abraham is related in Genesis to have received from God, was given by 'the fierce ritual of Syria, with the awe of a divine voice'. At that time the use of this phrase would undoubtedly have appeared to the majority of Christians in England as tantamount to a rejection of the view of Scripture which was generally identified with orthodoxy. When fifty years later, in 1912, a precisely similar view of the same incident was taken by a still living scholar, Mr. Richard Brook,[1] in another collection of theological dissertations emanating from teachers in the same University of Oxford to which the majority of the Essayists and Reviewers had belonged, I suppose that neither the writer himself nor the generality of his readers expected it to be questioned by any instructed student of the Bible that might come across it.

Midway between the two dates I have just named, 1861 and 1912, yet another group of Oxford divines had put out a like collection of theological essays, bearing the title of *Lux Mundi*. This appeared in 1889, twenty-eight years after *Essays and Reviews*, twenty-three years before *Foundations*. In *Lux Mundi* the editor, Mr., afterwards Bishop, Charles Gore,[2]

[1] B. 1880, then Fellow of Merton College, Oxford, now Vicar of Doncaster.

[2] B. 1853; d. 1932. Bishop of Worcester 1902–4; of Birmingham 1905–11; of Oxford 1911–19.

reaffirmed the doctrine which had been Colenso's, that the limitation of Christ's human knowledge by the conditions of his time made it impossible to appeal to his quotation of a psalm or a prophecy by the name of the author to whom it was commonly attributed, as stamping that attribution with the seal of infallible authority. It cannot be said indeed that this reaffirmation created no dismay among conservative Churchmen. On the contrary, coming as it did from one who was at the time at the head of an institution[1] founded in Oxford in memory of the great Tractarian scholar Pusey and bearing his name, it seemed to the famous preacher Henry Parry Liddon,[2] who was Pusey's most faithful disciple, a disastrous abandonment of a truth peculiarly associated with his master. For Pusey, in a commentary on the book of Daniel,[3] had treated the quotation by Christ of a prophecy thereinc ontained as 'spoken by Daniel the prophet' as though it decided for Christians the question of its authorship in the traditional sense. Nevertheless, when the view taken by Gore was once seen to be compatible, as it plainly was in his case, with unquestionable and indeed convinced and fervent orthodoxy on the central doctrines of the Church which he served, it was at once welcomed and followed by the younger generation of the party which inherited the traditions of the Tractarians.

[1] The Pusey House, founded 1884. [2] B. 1829; d. 1890.
[3] *Lectures on Daniel*, pp. 6 ff.

Very different had been the reception in 1862 of Colenso's quite similar assertion in the preface to his work on the Pentateuch that

'it is perfectly consistent with the most entire and sincere belief in our Lord's divinity to hold, as many do, that when He vouchsafed to become a Son of man, He took our nature fully and voluntarily entered into all the conditions of humanity, and among others into that which makes our growth in all ordinary knowledge *gradual* and *limited*. . . . Why should it be thought that He should speak with certain *Divine* knowledge upon this matter (the authorship of the Pentateuch) rather than upon other matters of ordinary science and history?'

Nowadays no one in England who is at all conversant with the state of theological opinion among us would expect a theological teacher to hold any other language than this. Yet Colenso was at the time regarded by a majority of his fellow bishops as heretical, and by those in his own province of South Africa as even unworthy, on account of his opinions, to hold the office of a bishop in the Church. For, in the year following the publication of his book, the local metropolitan, the Bishop of Capetown,[1] deposed him from his see. The jurisdiction of this prelate was not recognized by the law of the State; consequently his act had no legal force and his sentence was on that account disregarded by Colenso himself. But the majority of the Anglican clergy,

[1] Robert Gray, b. 1809; d. 1872. Bishop of Capetown 1847–72.

both in South Africa and elsewhere, considered it valid from the ecclesiastical point of view.[1]

There can be no doubt that, as regards the interpretation of Scripture, the Essayists and Reviewers and Bishop Colenso were on the winning side; their principles in that regard have triumphed all along the line. Yet this change in theological opinion has not entailed, as Browning's lines quoted at the beginning of this lecture seem to hint that in the poet's judgement it must entail, the abandonment of the Christian religion or even of its doctrine of Original Sin.

It was nevertheless perhaps not unnatural that such an expectation as Browning's should have been at first entertained. Christianity had been commonly presented as essentially a 'scheme of redemption', and the recognition of the 'radical evil', as Kant called it, in human nature, had been traditionally associated in the closest possible way with the legend of Adam and Eve and of their expulsion from the Garden of Eden. Thus it might be assumed to be the interest of every one who had experienced in himself the power of sin and the reality of deliverance through faith in Christ to maintain the historic truth of a tale which was supposed to hold the field

[1] The Convocation of Canterbury and the Pan-Anglican Synod of 1867 supported Bishop Gray's appointment of a Bishop of Maritzburg (not of Natal, to avoid raising the legal question of Colenso's claim to be Bishop of Natal) to replace Colenso; while fifty-five bishops of the Anglican Communion signed a document recognizing the validity of Colenso's deposition by Gray.

as the only account which any one had to offer of the state of things which that experience appeared to presuppose. The recently propounded hypothesis of Darwin, with its suggestion that men had risen from a lower rather than fallen from a higher level, seemed to threaten the very foundations of this account; and this might well be thought to be inconsistent with the truth of Christianity as usually represented, even by persons who were prepared to admit a considerable element of allegory in the details of the narrative in Genesis.

I have already pointed out that religious thought in England was late in assimilating the results of German philosophical speculation on religion[1]. Had it been otherwise, the religious public would have been less timorous in its reception of discoveries which would impair the credit of the Hebrew Scriptures as a record of the origins of the world and of the human race. For Kant had reasserted[2] the existence of Original Sin itself, not as a revealed dogma, bound up with the truth of a certain Biblical story, but as a fact attested by the moral consciousness of humanity at large and of each individual man in particular, a fact for which that story certainly could not account, although it might serve as a symbol or picture of it; while Hegel[3] had interpreted the same

[1] See, however, below, Additional Note A.

[2] *Die Religion innerhalb der Grenzen der bloßen Vernunft*, i, (*Werke*, ed. Hartenstein, vi. 95 ff.; ed. Berlin, vi. 1 ff.).

[3] *Die Religionsphilosophie*, II. ii. 1 (*Werke*, xii. 73 ff.).

story in detail as a mythical representation of a universal truth. This was the truth that man is translated from a state of natural innocence like that of the lower animals into the freedom of a responsible moral agent through the discovery that he is more than a natural creature and that, in acting as such by an indulgence of his natural appetites which with the beasts is a matter of course, he is untrue to the new knowledge of good and evil wherein lies the promise of his ascent to a higher level of existence. Such reflections, whatever criticism may be passed upon them, suggest that the essential truth of the Christian doctrine of a division in our nature requiring reconciliation is independent of the historic accuracy of the story in Genesis; and that the 'fall of man' which Christianity affirms is not necessarily incompatible with that 'ascent of man' from the condition of a mere animal to the status of a rational and moral being which the biological and anthropological evidence seems plainly to require. This most educated English Christians would now without hesitation allow; but the point of view from which they are able to allow it was far from being generally achieved seventy years ago; and this gave an importance to the concessions made to the critics of the historical value of the Old Testament by the writers of *Essays and Reviews* and by Bishop Colenso which may nowadays seem to be even ridiculously exaggerated.

IV

NON-RELIGIOUS IMMANENTISM

We may now pass from the subject of the discussion of the authority of Scripture to that of the profounder issues which lay behind that discussion. We have already seen that the drift of religious thought in England was at this period setting in the direction of what may in a general way be called *immanentism*. But one may distinguish two kinds of immanentism, according as the specifically religious attitude—an attitude rather to be recognized in instances than expressed by a formal definition of religion[1]—is taken to imply the existence of a transcendent object, and therefore to be excluded by any thoroughgoing immanentism, or is, on the other hand, itself brought within the scope of the immanentist view which is recommended to our acceptance.

Now I think it may be said that in England, speaking generally, during the earlier part of the period with which we are dealing, the immanentism which occupied the foreground of the field of attention for the public interested in these matters was an immanentism of the former of these two kinds. The practice of religion was assumed to be bound up

[1] See the writer's *Problems in the Relations of God and Man*, pp. 1–6.

with belief in a God who had initiated and who guided the world-process, but outside of whose essential being the world-process itself fell. On this assumption, if the world-process could be unified by some principle of evolution, such as Lamarck or Darwin had suggested for organic life, or as Herbert Spencer sought to find operative throughout the universe as a whole, an external 'Designer' could be dispensed with, and along therewith the whole range of activities which, under the name of religion, were directed towards a Supreme Personal Being, whose existence the world might be reasonably argued to postulate as the necessary presupposition of its own order and development.

The most influential British philosopher of the day, John Stuart Mill, throughout the greater part of his philosophical works made no mention of God, and his teaching left no place for the worship of God as a normal activity of rational human beings. Towards the end of his life, however, he dealt in three remarkable essays[1] with the subject of religion. In these he argued that, while there is not sufficient evidence to prove that the world was created by an intelligent and good God, who could be the object of worship, yet the supposition is not excluded by any positive knowledge of which we are in possession, so long as we do not attribute omnipotence to this God, so that the evils of the world need not be laid at his door. In the second of the three

[1] *Three Essays on Religion* (1874).

essays—that on *The Utility of Religion*[1]—he evinced an inclination to think that a 'religion of humanity' which, while directing, as every religion must direct, our emotions and desires towards an ideal object, should find its ideal object in a state of the human race, might serve all the purposes of a religion as well as one with a transcendent God and a future life for individuals. In the third and last essay, however—that on *Theism*,[2] written ten years later—he acknowledged that the idea of being a fellow worker with a God of perfect goodness and of great, although limited, power might be more inspiring and elevating than any which might essay to take its place. Thus for Mill at last *religion* is in the end bound up with the idea of a transcendent God. The belief that the religious values, if I may so speak, might be preserved without this idea, though he had entertained it for a while, he had never put forward with conviction and it seems, as we have seen, not to have persisted in his mind.

There is no doubt that this belief was suggested to Mill, as to many of his contemporaries, by the French philosopher Auguste Comte. This thinker had, as is well known, put forward as an adequate substitute for the God of his fathers Humanity conceived of as a single being, advancing toward perfection. This was a very interesting attempt to devise an immanentist religion, based on a philo-

[1] Written between 1850 and 1858.
[2] Written between 1868 and 1870.

sophy otherwise more nearly akin to those systems which found themselves unable to make room for religion at all than to the idealistic speculations which, as we shall see hereafter, claimed to lose nothing that was of genuine and permanent value in the religions of the past. For Comte's philosophy was 'positivism'. It limited human knowledge to 'phenomena', and denied to man any knowledge of the *causes* of these phenomena. Indeed, its author eventually manifested a desire to restrain his disciples from pursuing their inquiries even into facts and events occurring beyond the solar system or having occurred in a past so remote as to be of no present practical interest to human beings. Thus he discouraged the investigation of such problems as those relating to the constitution of the fixed stars and of the origin of species; problems on which English men of science in his own generation—John Herschel[1] and Charles Darwin—were destined to cast no little light.

It is probable that this last extravagance of Comte's and still more his attempt to invest his 'religion of humanity' with the trappings of ceremonious ritual and hierarchical authority, such as in the older religion of his own nation had impressed the popular imagination and surrounded the principal crises of human life with a halo of dignity and sanctity, tended to put Mill out of sympathy with the endeavour, by which he had at first been attracted, to replace

[1] B. 1792; d. 1871.

Christian theism by an idealization of society such as the French thinker had proposed. The abandonment of his earlier leanings to an enterprise of this kind brought him at last to a position best described by a word to the invention of which shortly afterwards by Thomas Huxley to denote his own position I have already referred—the word 'agnostic'.[1]

[1] This word, it should be noted, is here used to describe the position of a person who holds that a transcendent God *may* exist, but that we cannot tell whether he does exist or no, and must therefore fall back upon a view of the world which either excludes altogether the attitude which would be appropriate to a believer in a transcendent God, or at the least leaves the belief in such a God optional, to be approved in any one just so far as it may be authorized for him individually by his estimate of the strength of the evidence for what must be admitted to be at the best no more than an *hypothesis*. *Agnosticism*, in this sense of the word, may fairly be said to have been in the period which we are considering, the attitude prevalent among men of science and among those who were faithful to the tradition of the English empirical philosophy. But the word, which well describes this attitude, may also be used to describe such a doctrine as was advanced by Herbert Spencer, the doctrine that the nature of the Reality manifested to us in our experience can be demonstrated to be essentially unknowable as it is in itself, apart from our experience of it, since, knowledge being nothing else than a relation between an object and a subject, what is out of relation to a subject cannot possibly be known. This doctrine (which Spencer learned from Hamilton), whatever may be said for or against it, is plainly not the same as the assertion that there may be a transcendent personal God or there may not, but that we have no data sufficient to justify a positive statement either way—just as we might say that we really have no means of knowing whether or no there are living creatures on the planet Mars. It would be convenient if the term agnosticism were reserved

We have then a type of *immanentism* which is *positivist* or *agnostic*, according as it dogmatically denies to religion a legitimate place in human life because it conceives of religion as necessarily directed towards a transcendent object;[1] or, on the other hand, allows religion a place in human life, but only so long as it makes no claim to ground itself on *knowledge*, but is content to play with an hypothesis which can neither be verified nor disproved. This type of immanentism, however, is obviously incapable of satisfying that great multitude of men and women who cannot do without religion and who demand an object to worship which shall be more than an admittedly doubtful 'hypothesis'. If immanentism is to appeal to these, it must point to an object not without but within the world of experience, in which their faith and devotion can find the satisfaction denied them by Naturalism, whether in its atheistic or in its agnostic form. Nor, except for a small minority, has Humanity, conceived, after the fashion of Comte, as not merely an ideal but an object of worship, proved capable of affording this satisfaction. We should therefore expect to find an

to describe this last assertion; although from the first introduction of the term the two meanings would seem to have been insufficiently discriminated.

[1] It must be borne in mind, however, that the system of Comte, although definitely called 'positivism' by its author, did not, as we have seen, conform to this description, since it found a place for religion in life and provided it with an object other than a transcendent God.

immanentism of a type other than the naturalistic appearing sooner or later in English thought, as it had already at an earlier date appeared in German.

Already, at the beginning of our period, in the year 1852, we find this expectation in process of being realized. I will quote from a letter addressed at this date by Frederick Denison Maurice to Fenton Hort.[1] Maurice was one of the most influential figures in the religious world of his generation. He was a man of rare intellectual gifts and of lofty spirituality, who had passed from the Unitarianism in which he had been brought up to reasoned acceptance of, and enthusiastic faith in, the doctrines of the Trinity in the Godhead and of the divinity of Christ; an inspiring and practical leader in the contemporary movement for social reform and the founder of one of its most interesting experiments, the Working Men's College;[2] and the personal friend of Carlyle, of Mill, and of Tennyson. His dismissal from his professorship at King's College, London, in 1853, for calling in question the traditional doctrine of the unending and hopeless punishment in a future life of a vast multitude of individuals—perhaps of the majority of our race—for their failure during their earthly life to respond to the call to repentance, did not succeed in retarding the decay of a belief which is in our days openly abandoned by most Protestant Christians, and insisted upon in the old fashion by

[1] B. 1828; d. 1892. Hulsean Professor of Divinity, Cambridge.

[2] *Life of Maurice*, ii, pp. 232 ff.

scarcely any. Owing largely to a certain lack of literary genius, Maurice's writings have not been found attractive reading by a later generation, and there is a danger that his importance in his own day, compared with men of greater gifts of expression, may be underrated.

His correspondent, to whom the letter was addressed which I am about to quote, then a quite young man, was afterwards the celebrated Cambridge scholar who collaborated with Westcott[1] in the production of the Greek text of the New Testament which goes by their names.

To Hort, then, we find Maurice writing as follows:

'The external evidences of the last'—that is, the eighteenth—'century substituted Nature or at best a Demiurgus for God. The reaction against this mischievous dogma is the substitution of human institutions, or at best the Reason from which they flow, for God.

[1] Brooke Foss Westcott, b. 1825; d. 1901. Regius Professor of Divinity at Cambridge 1870–90; Bishop of Durham 1890–1901. He was himself a very influential theologian, and the circumstance that I shall scarcely mention him in these pages is not to be taken as suggesting that he was less important than many of whom I say more. He may be said to have, more than any one else, continued the tradition of the Maurician type of theology in the next generation; and in his emphasis on the significance of the doctrine of the Incarnation as a principle of social reform he was the chief link between that tradition and the generation of High Churchmen whose point of view found expression in *Lux Mundi*. The fact is not without importance in the history of Anglican theology that Charles Gore was a schoolboy at Harrow when Westcott was among the masters.

The Living and True God reveals Himself to the Reason; that is the Mesothesis of the external and internal. The idea of Revelation in the 17th and 18th centuries was the announcement of certain decrees, imperative laws enacted by God. In the nineteenth it is the discovery of an endless flux of which the source is in the creative energy of man. The Gospel of God concerning Himself in his Son is the reconciliation of these ideas, each of which by itself tends to Atheism *and* superstition.'[1]

In this acute diagnosis of the tendencies of the time the expression 'Mesothesis' betrays the influence of Coleridge who, according to Mill,[2] was one of the two seminal minds of the nineteenth century in England (the other being Bentham). The remark shows that Maurice was fully aware of the drift towards immanentism that had set in by the time of his writing the letter from which my quotation is taken, but trusted to the complementary factor in Christianity to keep alive what was true in the doctrine of a transcendent God, the one-sided assertion of which by the theologians of the eighteenth century had provoked an equally one-sided reaction. His observation also anticipates the prominence in modern apologetics of 'religious experience' as the true court of appeal in controversies wherein an earlier generation would have rested its case on demonstrations which took no account of any experience specifically religious in character but started

[1] *Life of Hort*, i. p. 176.
[2] See above, p. 33.

from premises equally at the disposal of every intelligent man, whether religious or not.

The phrase 'religious experience' was not indeed in common use until much later. It owes its present vogue largely to the title which William James gave to his Gifford Lectures, delivered at Edinburgh in 1901 and 1902, on *The Varieties of Religious Experience*. But it was in fact to what is now so called that such poets of the mid-nineteenth century as Tennyson and Browning or such a contemporary teacher as Carlyle were already appealing when they refused to acquiesce in a purely naturalistic view of the world, and yet did not rest their refusal either on such abstract metaphysical arguments as those proofs of the existence of God against which Hume and Kant had in the preceding century brought their damaging objections, or on any authoritative revelation, to be accepted without question or criticism as the word of God.

In contrast with the new appeal to religious experience, the older school ostensibly based its defence of religion not upon intuitions but upon a revelation accepted on the evidence of miracles attesting the supernatural power and therefore the supernatural authority of the Revealer; I say 'ostensibly', because in point of fact an appeal to the evidence of the intuitive moral consciousness has seldom been wholly absent from Christian apologetic, even when it has not been stressed or perhaps acknowledged.

The position of this older school was not, however, to be abandoned without a vigorous attempt at self-defence. Such an attempt was made in the Bampton Lectures of 1858 in *The Limits of Religious Thought Examined* by Henry Longueville Mansel,[1] Fellow of St. John's College at Oxford, Waynflete Professor of Moral and Metaphysical Philosophy in the University. This very able man, who was a pioneer of the modern study of philosophy in Oxford, asserted in these lectures a doctrine of the inability of human reason to apprehend reality as it is in itself. In this doctrine he was in the main a follower—though not an indiscriminating follower—of the Scottish philosopher, Sir William Hamilton,[2] whose name is now probably most widely known through Mill's examination of his system,[3] but who was a man of immense learning, and occupied a very prominent position among the philosophical teachers of Great Britain in his day.[4] Hamilton in his turn had, in respect of the view in which Mansel followed him, himself been carrying on, as will at once be observed, a line of thought suggested by Kant. He gave it, however, a different turn, in so far as he made the incompetence of reason to apprehend reality depend

[1] B. 1820; d. 1871. He was afterwards Regius Professor of Ecclesiastical History at Oxford, and died Dean of St. Paul's.

[2] B. 1788; d. 1856.

[3] *An Examination of Sir William Hamilton's Philosophy*, 1865 (3rd ed. 1867).

[4] He was Professor of Logic and Metaphysics at Edinburgh, 1836–56.

not, as with Kant, on what might be a peculiarity of *human* reason—its limitation by the forms of space and time—but on the impossibility of knowledge, which is essentially a relation, having for its object that which, as 'absolute' is essentially *out of* relation, —a disability which, it would appear, must attach to *any* knowledge whatsoever.

With Hamilton's doctrine of the inability of the human (not to say of any) reason to apprehend reality as it is in itself Mansel associated a recommendation to submit to the revelation given in Scripture, the contents whereof we were, in consequence of the native limitations of our cognitive faculties, in no position to criticize. In this contention Mansel was fully conscious of what he was about. Not only did he intend to come forward as an opponent of the idealistic philosophy of Hegel, with its pretension to establish religion upon a rational basis; but he found already in Kant, whom in certain respects he regarded as his master, a fatal tendency in the direction which his idealistic successors had subsequently taken. Kant had indeed destroyed, to his own satisfaction, the foundations of any possible *metaphysical* theology, by his demonstration that the human understanding must, in attempting to attain to a knowledge of ultimate reality, fall of necessity into antinomies and contradictions. But he had, as is well known, allowed to reason in its practical or moral activity an access to reality which he denied to it in its *theoretical* activity. By a surprising application of a

text from St. Paul,[1] Mansel accused the philosopher of Königsberg of thereby 'building again what he had destroyed' and so 'making himself a transgressor'.[2] We were, in Mansel's judgement, no more able to affirm such and such a statement made about God in Scripture to be unacceptable because it seemed to be inconsistent with the laws of morality than because it was irreconcilable with some speculative principle applicable to our everyday experience. There might be 'moral miracles', suspensions of moral, no less than of natural, laws.

It is not to be wondered at that this hardy attempt to establish orthodoxy on a basis of complete scepticism was at once fiercely assailed by theologians such as Maurice,[3] who had learned from Coleridge a confidence in reason as 'the candle of the Lord'[4] within us akin to, even if less thoroughgoing than, that which found expression in the philosophy of the great German idealists. To these Mansel's theology seemed to be a direct repudiation of the great principles embodied in the orthodox doctrines of the Trinity and the Incarnation; of the faith in the eternal manifestation of himself in the Intelligible Word or Logos affirmed by the one doctrine, and

[1] Gal. ii. 18.

[2] *The Limits of Religious Thought Examined*, p. 200.

[3] See *What is Revelation?* (1859) and its *Sequel* (1860).

[4] Prov. xx. 27. Cp. Butler, *Analogy* (Oxford, 1874, p. 310). The phrase was a favourite one with Whichcote, the leader of the Cambridge Platonists in the seventeenth century. See Additional Note B.

of the faith in Christ as the express portrait or likeness of the invisible God[1] affirmed by the other. But even those who, in their indifference to the philosophical bearings of doctrines which they themselves accepted merely on authority, and shrank from venturing to bring into close relation with any free speculation, might not have been indisposed to welcome an argument which seemed to place the traditional dogmas once for all out of reach of philosophical criticism, were soon startled to find the philosophical tenets of the Bampton Lectures openly adopted by Herbert Spencer in 1862 among the 'First Principles' of his system.[2] For this system, so far from being intended, like Mansel's, to clear the way for the acceptance of the dogmas of orthodox Christianity, was, beyond all possibility of mistake, inconsistent with the recognition of any revelation, and indeed with the acceptance of any religion which should go beyond the acknowledgement that, in the old phrase, *omnia exeunt in mysterium*. It is by a singular irony of fate that the ingenious champion of the ancient creeds who would fain have put the aspiring human reason helpless under the feet of a wholly transcendent revelation has his niche in the history of philosophy as the immediate forerunner of Herbert Spencer, the most ambitious projector of a system of pure naturalism that the nineteenth century knew.

Close on the heels of Mansel's Bampton Lectures came, also from Oxford (although one contributor

[1] Col. i. 15. [2] *First Principles*, p. 39.

was from the sister University of Cambridge), the collections of *Essays and Reviews*, to which I have already referred;[1] and no doubt when delivering his lectures, although they were given before the publication of the book, Mansel had in mind some of those who were among its authors. Of the dissertations contained therein the most remarkable are probably that by Mark Pattison[2] on 'The Tendencies of Religious Thought in England in the Eighteenth Century', and that by Benjamin Jowett[3] on 'The Interpretation of Scripture'.

The former was, in its attempt to survey the history of theological opinion scientifically and dispassionately, a pioneer work in England. It was the production of a distinguished scholar, who had for a time been a follower of Newman, but had abandoned his allegiance and entered upon the pilgrimage from the Anglicanism of the Oxford Movement to a position of cynical detachment from all theological and ecclesiastical parties of which he has left us a vivid picture in the brilliant though bitter *Memoirs* published soon after his death in 1884.[4]

[1] See above, pp. 72 ff.

[2] B. 1813; d., as Rector of Lincoln College, Oxford, 1884.

[3] B. 1817; d., as Master of Balliol College and Regius Professor of Greek at Oxford, 1893.

[4] See for the reception of his essay, *Memoirs*, pp. 314 ff. In the novel of Mrs. Humphry Ward, *Robert Elsmere*, mentioned below, p. 115 n., 'the Squire' is made the mouthpiece of the opinions of Pattison.

The other essay mentioned was by a man who, as tutor and afterwards Master of Balliol College, Oxford (which he was largely responsible for raising to the eminent position it has long enjoyed as the most intellectually distinguished of the Oxford colleges, so far as the achievements of those there educated are concerned), became the trainer and inspirer of many men who have played important parts in various spheres of the national life during the last seventy or eighty years. It is as a translator of Plato that Jowett will live in English literature. His original writings, though admirable in many ways, have not made an impression on the reading public corresponding to that which was produced by his singular personality on the generation of which he was one of the most influential teachers. His contribution to *Essays and Reviews* was, however, notable for the frank decision with which the author refused to exempt the Bible from the canons of interpretation which would be applied to any other book.[1]

The point of view farthest removed from that of orthodox tradition reached in the book was probably that adopted in his negative attitude towards the belief in miracles by Baden Powell, Professor of Geometry at Oxford,[2] the father of the eminent soldier known to all the world to-day as 'the Chief

[1] *Essays and Reviews*, p. 377. 'Interpret the Scripture like any other book'.

[2] B. 1796; d. 1860. Cp. *Letters and Correspondence of J. H. Newman*, i, p. 340.

Scout', the founder of a great international society, the beneficial effects of which on the younger generation are everywhere recognized. But perhaps the most significant indication of the immanentist trend in religious thought to be found in *Essays and Reviews* occurs in what has been generally considered the least revolutionary piece included among them—that on 'The Education of the World,' by Frederick Temple,[1] then Head Master of Rugby School and afterwards successively Bishop of Exeter, Bishop of London, and Archbishop of Canterbury. 'Had (Christ's) revelation been delayed till now', we there read, 'assuredly it would have been hard for us to recognize his Divinity, for the faculty of Faith has turned inwards, and cannot now accept any outer manifestations of the truth of God.'[2] The remark might serve as a text for the expositions of Christian doctrine to be found, twenty years later, in the discourses of Green,[3] the chief representative in England of the idealistic immanentism which Hegel had made current in Germany thirty to forty years before. In all probability we may see in it, if not an effect of Temple's intercourse with Jowett, who was his colleague at Balliol[4] and an intimate friend, at least the expression of a thought common to the two. For to Jowett, though he subsequently regarded with a disillusioned

[1] B. 1821; d. 1902.
[2] *Essays and Reviews*, p. 24.
[3] See above, p. 42; below, Ch. V.
[4] Temple was Fellow of Balliol from 1842 to 1848.

eye the ambitions of Hegelianism,[1] was due more to than to any other one man the beginning of that sympathetic study at Oxford of the post-Kantian idealism which has had such important results in the history of British philosophy.

For from that sympathetic study of the post-Kantian idealism and especially of the work of Hegel arose the great school of British idealism which in the world of professional philosophers—a world which in the last two decades of the nineteenth century was becoming a much larger world, with a definite character of its own, than it had been in the earlier years of the period which we are here considering—eventually challenged and worsted the empiricism so long dominant in English thought; and that notwithstanding the recent reinforcement of the latter by Spencer's ingenious attempt to turn the edge of the Kantian criticism by showing that the doctrine of evolution would serve to explain the presence in knowledge of an *a priori* element without making it necessary to desert the principle of its ultimate derivation from sense-experience alone.[2]

The victory of this idealistic school in the academic arena over the empiricism which it found in possession of the field was insufficiently appreciated by the general public in England itself; while abroad it has been long in obtaining due recognition even from

[1] *Life and Letters of Jowett*, ii, pp. 249–50.

[2] See *Principles of Psychology*, pt. vii, ch. 11, 'The Universal Postulate'. Cp. *Data of Ethics*, ch. 7, § 45 *ad fin.*

scholars otherwise well acquainted with English philosophical literature. For conventional ideas of one's foreign neighbours die hard; and it had become a fixed conviction, not easily to be shaken, that the English mind was wholly preoccupied by the scientific investigations of Darwin and Tylor, the inductive logic of Mill, and the evolutionary speculations of Spencer; while German observers in particular were too ready to assume that the British idealists were no more than belated imitators of a German fashion already abandoned by the Germans themselves: that Green and Caird, Bradley and Bosanquet, did but illustrate the epigram that 'bad German philosophies, when they die, go to Oxford'.

I well remember the disappointment of a foreign visitor to Oxford itself towards the end of the last century at finding in the official list of philosophical lectures many on Kant but none on Spencer. Not ten years ago, a very eminent man, the late Ernst Troeltsch, in a lecture which he was prevented by his lamented death from delivering at my own invitation in Oxford and which was subsequently published,[1] spoke of the problem of individuality as one which had engaged the attention of German thinkers but might probably be unfamiliar to Englishmen, whose interest was known to be mainly in the study of the origin and external development of institutions. Yet within a few weeks of the date at which

[1] *Christian Thought*; *its History and Application* (London, 1923). See especially pp. 8, 13.

this lecture was to have been given there died, at the age of 74, an English thinker, Bernard Bosanquet, who was universally recognized by English scholars as one of the foremost representatives of philosophy in his generation, and whose principal books[1] had been devoted to the consideration of this very problem of individuality. But of his work on this subject, and indeed of his very existence and that of the school to which he belonged, Troeltsch, despite the considerable attention which had been paid by him to English authors, might, for all the notice he takes of them, have been wholly ignorant.

In the English-speaking countries, however, it was not only in the debates of professional philosophers that this idealistic school achieved success. It has affected, indirectly indeed for the most part, yet profoundly, the religious thought of the educated classes generally. To some brief account of it then from this point of view I shall devote the next lecture of this course.

[1] His Gifford Lectures at Edinburgh on *The Principle of Individuality and Value* (1911) and *The Value and Destiny of the Individual* (1912).

V

THE BRITISH IDEALISTS[1]

THE subject in this lecture is the influence exerted upon religious thought in England by the school of British philosophy which drew its initial inspiration from Kant and his idealistic successors in Germany. As has been already observed, the importance of this school has been inadequately recognized by the scholars of continental Europe: it may therefore be desirable to mention some works from which first-hand information concerning its philosophy of religion may be drawn by students desirous of acquainting themselves with its principles and methods. I would refer them to Bradley's[2] *Ethical Studies*, published in 1872 and recently, since the author's death, reprinted; to the theological addresses and sermons of Thomas Hill Green[3] contained in the third volume of his collected works,[4] along with the memoir of their author by Richard Lewis Nettleship[5] in the same volume; the essays concerned with religion in Bradley's *Essays on Truth and Reality*;[6] the second series of Gifford Lectures by Bosanquet, entitled *The Value and Destiny of the Individual*,[7] and his later book on *The Meeting of Extremes in Contemporary Philosophy*;[8] together with the stray reflections on religious subjects of R. L. Nettleship in the second volume of his

[1] See Additional Note C.
[2] See above, p. 43.
[3] See above, p. 42.
[4] 1891.
[5] B. 1846; d. 1892.
[6] 1914.
[7] 1913.
[8] 1897.

Remains,[1] and some of the *Lay Sermons* of Edward Caird.[2]

Of the theological teaching of the school two well-marked stages may, I think, be distinguished; an earlier, represented by Green and Caird, and a later, represented by Bradley and Bosanquet; the later exhibiting a distinct advance upon the earlier in the direction of that immanentism which is the note of the whole tendency for which the group of thinkers of which I am speaking may be said to stand.

It was the endeavour of this whole group to set over against an interpretation of the movement of civilization which exhibited it as progressing towards a view essentially such as is suggested by the natural sciences another and wholly different interpretation. According to the former there was nothing in the last resort to be found in the world capable of affording satisfaction to the religious sentiment; so that this sentiment must either eventually perish of inanition or must maintain itself by feeding upon what is admittedly a mere creature of the poetic imagination, without any claim to be regarded as the revelation of a reality beyond the individual minds wherein alone it has its being. According to the idealistic school of which I am now speaking, the very existence in the world of art, morality, religion, nay of science itself, is evidence that reality is something other and more than a concatenation of facts, perceived by the senses or inferred from what is so

[1] 1907. [2] 1907. See above, p. 42.

perceived, and considered in abstraction from all reference to the mind for which alone they constitute a world at all. But if in this way religion (which is our concern in these lectures) is given a place of its own, and that necessarily a very high, if not the highest, place among the 'gifts of civilization',[1] it is for that very reason no longer left in that position of externality, if not of hostility, to secular interests which had, as we have seen, been assigned to it by the general tradition of Christendom.

The generation to which this new idealistic philosophy addressed itself was one painfully conscious (to quote a phrase used by the poet Matthew Arnold in his remarkable poem *The Scholar Gipsy*) of 'divided aims'. It was deeply impressed by the contradiction between the view of the world's origin and prospects recommended to its notice by natural science and that traditionally associated with its religious faith and hope. It was repelled on the one hand by a theology which seemed alien to and remote from much in the modern world that seemed the most splendid in

[1] This phrase I take from the title of a remarkable volume of sermons published in 1880 by Richard William Church, Dean of St. Paul's (b. 1815; d. 1890). I am glad of the opportunity of mentioning his name as that of a man eminent for the distinction of his scholarship, the saintliness of his character, and the wisdom of his judgement among the prominent ecclesiastics of his time, the influence of whom upon many contemporaries better known to the public than himself entitles him to a more important place in the history of religious thought in his country than his comparatively small output of theological and religious literature might suggest.

performance and the richest in promise, and, on the other hand, by a naturalism which left man without a Father in heaven, without real freedom to will and to act, without an outlook beyond the grave. To such a generation the new idealistic philosophy professed itself able to show that the true object of religious faith and hope was to be sought not *without* but *within* the world; only, if it were to be found there, the world must be envisaged not, after the abstract fashion of the natural sciences, as mere 'matter in motion', but in its concrete reality as the object of mind, unintelligible apart from the mind whose object it is. It claimed to be in a position to affirm that the great doctrines of Christianity, of manhood taken into God, of life won by the losing of it in death, and the like, were true, not indeed as the record or the anticipation of events miraculous and supernatural in a far distant past or in a remote future quite unlike the present, but rather as statements of the inner significance of the spiritual life of man in every age, of the whole history of civilization itself.

Of the grounds upon which this philosophy based its interpretation of experience and its reassertion of the Christian dogmas, not as mysteries revealed from another world to baffle our reason, and to humble our satisfaction in the achievements of our civilization, but rather as the expression of principles already implied in the ordinary procedure of that reason and partially embodied in the civilization which it had

created, I know no better brief account than will be found in Edward Caird's sketch of Hegel's philosophy contained in his little book on Hegel in the well-known series of 'Philosophical Classics' published by the famous firm of Blackwood.[1]

For although the thinkers of whom I am now speaking are by no means fairly described as merely disciples of Hegel, yet their attitude towards religion was so profoundly influenced by Hegel's interpretation of Christianity that we shall not be going far wrong in trying to understand it in the light of that interpretation. I will therefore attempt in a very few words to remind my readers of the principles of Hegel's philosophy, since, without some image of it as a whole before the mind's eye, his interpretation of Christianity is hardly to be understood.

The fundamental thought of Hegel is, I take it, this. In the first place, all the contrasts and oppositions with which our experience acquaints us—even those which seem to be the most irreconcilable and permanent—are nevertheless, just because they are contrasts and oppositions, only intelligible through an identity, within which they are related to one another, even though it be only *as* opposites. The very 'law of contradiction' which is treated in the Aristotelian logic as the supreme principle or axiom of our thinking is no exception to this rule. For the negation announced when we say that 'nothing which is A is not-A' carries with it, as we know, a 'principle of

[1] 1883, reprinted 1886.

the excluded middle' that everything must be either A or not A; and this principle is on the face of it the assertion of a *disjunction* indeed, but of a disjunction between two members of one world, which together constitute that one world in its completeness, and so are in their very disjunction from one another *conjoined* by their membership of that one world.

In the second place, it is a consideration no less essential to Hegel's position that this unity, which is present even in the utmost differences revealed by experience, is not adequately understood so long as we think of it as merely coexisting alongside with these differences, as though it were only accidentally differentiated, its own fundamental unity remaining essentially unaffected by the differences. On the contrary it can only be rightly appreciated when we can see that this unity is just what it is *because* it is thus differentiated; so that the differences imply the unity and the unity the differences in a mutual implication, which we may illustrate from the most abstract region of experience by the nature of a line, which *must* be straight *or* curved, or by that of number, which *must* be odd *or* even. Yet it is not in this world of mathematical abstractions that Hegel would seek an illustration capable of serving as a clue to the nature of the final or ultimate unity underlying or, one should rather say, manifested in the manifold differences of that 'infinite number of creatures' of which the Wise Man speaks.[1] His clue

[1] Ecclesiasticus xvi. 17.

he finds rather in our own self-consciousness, and this is why his philosophy is entitled to the name, by which it goes in the history of thought, of 'absolute idealism'.

For the very life of a rational human self consists in the continual apprehension of that which is at first presented to it as other than itself, yet which (as Kant had shown) can only be understood or even apprehended so far as it exemplifies those forms of sensibility and understanding which belong to the self's own constitution, and is thus brought, as an object to the self, within that 'unity of apperception', outside of which we can be cognizant of nothing at all. And, conversely, that which is thus only to be understood or apprehended as an object to the self, must, if the apprehension and understanding are to deserve these names, have its own real being in their relation to the self which it informs, and which, apart from it, is a mere abstract potentiality of apprehension and knowledge.

Bearing in mind this summary presentment of the fundamental principle of Hegelianism, let us pass to the description of the Hegelian interpretation of religious experience given by Edward Caird in the little book on Hegel to which I have already referred.

In Caird's words, that interpretation involved 'the complete rejection of ordinary supernaturalism',[1]

[1] Op. cit., p. 92.

and this because, for Hegel, 'the world of intelligence and freedom cannot be different from the world of nature and necessity; it can only be the same world seen in a new light, or subjected to a further interpretation'.[1] With this discovery of the spiritual world *within* the natural instead of *beyond* it goes a characteristic distrust of any such withdrawal on religious grounds from the 'world', in the sense of ordinary secular society, with its political and (to use a convenient modern term) cultural activities as had hovered in different forms before Catholic and Puritan alike as the ideal for those who 'would be perfect'. This distrust is strikingly expressed by Green's declaration, in a passage often quoted by his friends and followers, that 'there is no other genuine enthusiasm of humanity than one which has travelled the common highway of reason—the life of the good neighbour and the honest citizen—and can never forget that it is only on the further stage of the same journey'.[2] So Caird, expounding Hegel's hostility to any claim to have attained to the knowledge of God by a special inspiration which could dispense with the ordinary use of reason and experience of life, says that such a claim 'is an anachronism for the modern spirit, which demands that the saint should also be a man of the world, and that the prophet should show the logical necessity of his vision'.[3]

[1] P. 125. [2] *Introduction to Hume*, ii; *Works*, i, p. 371.
[3] *Hegel*, p. 131.

'He that saveth his life shall lose it, and he that loseth his life shall save it.'[1] This saying of Jesus seemed to Hegel and to those who followed him in his philosophy of religion to express at once the central truth of Christianity and the universal principle of all spiritual—and that is to say, for those to whom all reality is ultimately spiritual, of all real—being. But it must not, Caird tells us, be 'supposed to mean that this world must be sacrificed in order that the next may be won'. For, on the one hand, a mere giving up of a present for the sake of a future satisfaction is 'only the substitution of otherworldliness for worldliness, and selfishness is not overcome by its gratification being postponed'; and, on the other hand, 'it is not the life of this world, the life renounced, which is regained, but a life in another world which is supposed to be utterly different from it'. 'The true interpretation of the maxim is that the individual must die to an isolated life, in order that he may live the spiritual life, the universal life.'[2]

I call attention to these passages because they make it plain that the idealistic philosophy with which we are here dealing was above all things concerned to find within *this* world, within the life of the family, of the State, of secular civilization, those religious values which had so often been thought of

[1] So quoted by Caird. See Mark viii. 35 and the parallel passages in the other Gospels.

[2] *Hegel*, p. 218.

as belonging to another world than this where 'they neither marry nor are given in marriage'[1] and as manifested in this world only or chiefly through institutions whose authority and sanctions were supernational; a world wherein natural affections and political obligations are left behind, and neither the provision of material comfort, nor the service of the State, nor art, nor science, can retain any independent value of their own in the presence of that all-absorbing relation to God, in which alone it was supposed that the human soul could find satisfaction. In its substitution of the secular life of man, viewed in a certain way, for a specifically 'religious' life under ecclesiastical control, as the proper sphere of Christian duty, the idealistic philosophy was but carrying on the tradition of the Reformation; while in its refusal to treat the 'other world' of religion as 'above the sky' or 'beyond the grave' it was in harmony with the vein of theological reflection represented in England by Maurice, whose writings are known to have exerted a considerable influence on Green in his youth.[2] Maurice had insisted[3] that 'eternity' in the religious sense was not to be taken as signifying endlessness of duration, but rather a certain *quality* of being which belonged to the human spirit here and now. It was indeed this interpretation of 'eternity' that led Maurice to affirm that by 'eternal punishment' should be understood a state in which im-

[1] Mark xii. 25. [2] *Memoir* (in *Works*, vol. iii), p. xxv.
[3] See *Theological Essays* (1871), pp. 442 ff.

penitent sinners must always and everywhere be, not a state in which individuals who had not by a certain date repented of their sins would endlessly continue; an affirmation which, strange as the fact may seem to us to-day, cost him his theological professorship at King's College, London, in 1853.[1] But the idealistic philosophy could at least be supposed not merely to decline to relegate the religious values to a different world from that in which our everyday life is lived. It might be interpreted as denying that there is any world in which those values could find a more perfect expression than any which is possible under the conditions of earthly existence.

The elder generation of the British idealists did not intend to commit themselves to this denial. Green was indeed mainly concerned to insist upon the 'immortality of the soul' in the sense of the 'eternity of thought' and to contend that the destructibility of thought is 'a contradiction in terms, for destruction has no meaning except in relation to thought'.[2] But there can be little doubt that he himself, while anxious not to claim an insight which he was conscious that he did not possess into the conditions under which personal life could be continued after death, inclined to believe in such continuance, and regarded this faith as congruous with, though perhaps not necessarily following from, his philo-

[1] Cp. Tennyson's poem *To the Rev. F. D. Maurice* (1854).

[2] *Fragment on Immortality* in *Works*, vol. iii, p. 159.

sophical convictions. There is a relevant passage in his chief philosophical treatise, the posthumously published *Prolegomena to Ethics*.[1]

'There may be reason to hold', he there says, 'that there are capacities of the human spirit not realisable in persons under the conditions of any society that we know or can positively conceive, or that may be capable of existing on the earth. Such a belief may be warranted by the consideration, on the one hand, of the promise which the spirit gives of itself both in its actual occasional achievement and in the aspirations of which we are individually conscious; on the other hand of the limitations which the necessity of confinement to a particular social function seems to impose on individual attainment. We may in consequence justify the supposition that the personal life, which historically or on earth is lived under conditions which thwart its development, is continued in a society, with which we have no means of communication through the senses, but which shares in and carries further any measure of perfection attained by man under the conditions of life that we know. Or we may content ourselves with saying that the personal self-conscious being, which comes from God, is for ever continued in God. Or we may pronounce the problem suggested by the constant spectacle of unfulfilled human promise to be simply insoluble. But meanwhile the negative assurance at any rate must remain, that a capacity which is working except as personal, cannot be realised in any impersonal modes of being.'

A little later[2] he adds:

'On the whole, our conclusion must be that, great as

[1] P. 195. [2] P. 199.

are the difficulties which beset the idea of human development when applied to the facts of life, we do not escape them but empty the idea of any real meaning, if we suppose the end of the development to be one in the attainment of which persons—agents who are ends to themselves—are extinguished.'

Very similar to the attitude of Green in this matter was that of Edward Caird. In one of his *Lay Sermons delivered in Balliol College*[1] he makes this quite clear.

'If we think', he says, 'of the world as a manifestation of a rational and moral principle—and that it must be so conceived seems to be a necessary presupposition of all our mental and moral life—we must regard it as existing for the realisation of that which is best and highest; and that best and highest we can hardly conceive as anything but the training and development of immortal spirits. The outcome of a world which is the realisation of the Will of God must be either immortality for beings who are made in his image, or something better—and what better can there be that does not involve immortal life?'

We shall soon see that this attitude towards the hope of immortality taken by Green and Caird is very different from that which we find adopted by the younger exponents of the same type of idealism. Bradley and Bosanquet. But, when we read such passages as those which I have quoted from Green and Caird, it is easy to understand how their philo-

[1] P. 381.

sophy could act as a great stimulus to theological progress along lines which those who pursued them could without absurdity regard as legitimately continuous with orthodox tradition. It relieved the mind of the haunting dread that reality might prove to be in its ultimate nature a soulless mechanism by affirming that we cannot conceive of objects at all apart from self-conscious mind or spirit, which is thus presupposed by the very facts which the natural sciences set out to explain. It emphasized our right to interpret our experiences by the categories which we count the highest. It claimed supreme worth for self-conscious personality as the only possible subject of the spiritual activities, knowledge and love and goodness, on which we set the highest value, and as therefore the only adequate revelation of the ultimate Reality which we call God. It is not difficult to see how the Christian doctrine of the Incarnation, as it had no doubt coloured the thought of those who taught this philosophy, might seem to harmonize with their conclusions. Moreover, the conception of society as an organism, which was maintained not only by the idealists who looked back to Hegel, but also by Herbert Spencer, whom the new biology had inspired to seek throughout the whole range of our experience for evidence of evolution or development, set the idea of the Church, which had been revived by the Oxford Movement, in a new light, and presented it after a fashion more congruous with the principles of interpretation generally followed in

other fields, than that in which it had commonly been presented during the period in which the Oxford Movement had arisen, when individualistic notions, which the leaders of that movement had for the most part shared, were almost universally prevalent.

Thus it is not surprising to find that the idealism of Green formed the background of the theology of the already mentioned collection of theological essays which appeared in 1889 and in the other writings of such contributors to that collection as Henry Scott Holland,[1] John Richard Illingworth,[2] and Robert Campbell Moberly.[3] That Green's reassertion of the spiritual nature of reality might serve this purpose had been foreseen by the disillusioned and anti-clerical clergyman, Mark Pattison, who had in his youth been a contributor to *Essays and Reviews*, and who remarked that the 'Tories' were beginning soon after the philosopher's death to carry off his honey to their hive.[4]

[1] B. 1847; Canon of St. Paul's; d., as Regius Professor of Divinity at Oxford, 1918.

[2] B. 1848; d. 1915; author of *Personality, Human and Divine* (Bampton Lectures, 1894).

[3] B. 1845; d., as Regius Professor of Pastoral Theology at Oxford, 1903; author of *Atonement and Personality* (1901).

[4] *Memoirs*, p. 167. The word 'Tories' is used for any whom Pattison reckoned to be 'reactionaries' whether in religion, philosophy, or politics. But he was very much out if he supposed that the theologians who were to exploit Green's philosophy in support of their views would prove to be 'Tories' in a political sense.

The same philosophy was also the background of a work of less importance than *Lux Mundi*, which, however, made some stir at the time of its publication,[1] *The New Theology*, by Reginald John Campbell, a Congregationalist minister, distinguished as a preacher, who was afterwards ordained as an Anglican clergyman.[2] The immanentism of this book was extreme and uncritical; but the other writers whom I have mentioned, while more obviously, because more directly, influenced by the teaching of Green, from whom some of them had indeed personally received instruction, were not unconscious that dangers to orthodox belief might arise from the development beyond a certain point of the immanentist tendencies inherent in the idealistic philosophy to which they were so much indebted. Their chief concern, however, was to revive the conception, which they found already present in certain of the Greek Fathers of the Church, of the Incarnation as the culmination of a self-revelation of the Divine Logos who had from the first been immanent in the religious history of mankind;[3] and it is plain that insistence upon this conception was bound to reinforce the general movement in an immanentist direction which we have seen to be characteristic of the period which I am describing.[4]

[1] 1907. [2] B. 1867.

[3] Cp. Athanasius, *de Incarnatione Verbi*.

[4] I will mention here in a footnote (but without any inten-

But, despite the impetus thus given by the idealism which during the later years of the nineteenth century

tion of suggesting thereby that the matter is of less importance than that dealt with in the text) the influence of Green's teaching in the creation of a type of religious thought which, while less ready to accommodate itself to traditional formulae than that which finds expression in *Lux Mundi*, and often refusing conformity with existing forms of worship on the score of a conscientious objection to repeat those formulae, was yet definitely religious, and sympathetic with all religious activities that did not involve affirmations which might prove inconsistent with complete freedom of scientific and historical inquiry.

This type of thought is well represented in several of the novels of Mrs. Humphry Ward (b. 1851; d. 1920), the niece of Matthew Arnold. The first of these, which (partly in consequence of its having attracted the attention of the aged Gladstone) at once made her celebrated, was *Robert Elsmere* (1888). This described a young clergyman's loss of his faith in historical Christianity on being initiated—by a character which was no doubt suggested to the author by her acquaintance with Mark Pattison—into the methods and results of modern historical criticism. (Many years after, the authoress, in *The Case of Richard Meynell*, 1911, made a clergyman whom she marries to the daughter of her earlier hero able, as a 'modernist', to officiate as an Anglican clergyman, without prejudice to the principles for which his father-in-law had felt bound to abandon the same ministry.)

Robert Elsmere contained a picture of Green himself under the thin disguise of 'Mr. Grey'. A later story by the same writer, *Marcella* (1894) introduced among its characters one of Green's most remarkable pupils, who, before his early death in 1883 at the age of 31, had carried into the service of the poor working people in East London the sociological ideals inculcated by the philosopher. This was Arnold Toynbee (called in the novel Edward Hallin), after whom was named a celebrated 'settlement' in Whitechapel, designed to bring into relations

came to prevail in the philosophical schools to a new apologetic for orthodox Christianity, that idealism did not escape the suspicion that it was endangering the interests of a religion which centred in a personal relation between man and the object of his worship by rendering doubtful the legitimacy of ascribing to that object a genuine personality. For God seemed to be by this philosophy sometimes at any rate identified with the common element in individual 'rational'

of personal intercourse classes which had come to dwell apart and know nothing of each other except as receivers and performers of economic services. The life of 'Toynbee Hall' was inaugurated by Samuel Barnett, vicar of the neighbouring church of St. Jude, of whom the French statesman Clemenceau is reported to have observed that he was one of three men met by him on a visit to England in 1884 to whom he would have allowed the quality of greatness (*Canon Barnett*, by his Wife, 1918, ii, p. 45). Barnett (b. 1844; d. 1913) was a clergyman of the national Church belonging to a school of thought within it which was much in sympathy with the movement of which Balliol College at Oxford, in the days when Jowett was its master and Green one of its tutors, may be said to have been the heart; a movement deeply religious and passionately concerned with social reform, but averse from dogmatic affirmations, and inclined to see in the nation or State rather than in the Church the organized expression of the spiritual life which it was intent upon promoting. I would mention here also another Balliol man whom this same movement inspired to widely beneficent activity, Charles Stewart Loch (b. 1850; d. 1923), well known as the Secretary for many years of the 'Charity Organisation Society', and his friend and fellow worker, the philosopher Bernard Bosanquet, of whom I shall soon have to speak as one of those who carried on the tradition of the school of Green in a manner which made its idealism less readily available as the background for a defence of orthodox Christianity.

or 'self-conscious' minds which distinguished themselves from God rather as instances from the 'universal' of which they were instances than as persons from One no less (at least) as really a Person than themselves. This suspicion found expression (as I have already said[1]) in a book of lectures delivered on the foundation of Arthur Balfour (afterwards Earl of Balfour) in 1886 by Andrew Seth, afterwards known as Pringle-Pattison, who eventually became Professor of Logic and Metaphysics in the University of Edinburgh. In this book, which was entitled *Hegelianism and Personality*, Seth criticized, from the point of view above indicated, the philosophy of Green as then recently presented to the world in the posthumously published *Prolegomena to Ethics*. Of the *Lux Mundi* writers and their school several of the more philosophical—such as Illingworth and Wilfrid Richmond (who was not himself a contributor to that collection)—devoted much attention in their subsequent work to the problem of *personality* which was thus brought to the front; and this was also the case with Moberly, whose *Atonement and Personality* was one of the most important theological treatises produced by this group.

Their aim in these studies of this problem was to elaborate a theory of personality which, while recognizing, with the absolute idealists, that it was not a mere principle of isolation, separating each 'person' from every other by an impassable gulf, should yet

[1] Above, p. 84.

avoid treating it as a feature of spiritual life which might be abolished and transcended in the Absolute, and establish it as belonging to the ultimate reality of the universe. In enforcing this theory these theologians made much use of the traditional Christian doctrine of a Trinity of 'persons' in the unity of the divine essence as suggesting that, rightly conceived, the mutual differences of persons would be found to involve the unity of these different persons in a fellowship, to the constitution of which these differences were at the same time permanently necessary. Now in this emphasis on personality as belonging to the ultimate reality of the universe the theologians of whom I am speaking were, I think, on the whole in agreement with Green himself, but not with the general tendency of the idealism which he had maintained. This was soon to become apparent in the development which that idealism was to receive at the hands of two other distinguished thinkers, members of the same University with Green, Francis Herbert Bradley and Bernard Bosanquet.

Both these philosophers explicitly deny that *personality* can be regarded, from the point of view of metaphysics, as ultimately real. They are indeed able successfully to show that the relation to God of which in religion we are aware is never, as experienced, merely the relation which can exist between one finite person and another. For it is certainly the very aim of the whole business of religion that

the worshipper should find himself in God and God in him. Indeed, even in what we count as the highest of human relationships, in love, we have already got beyond that 'legal world', as we may call it, 'of claims and counter-claims', to which, historically speaking, the word 'person' may be said to have originally belonged.

But even the distinction between God and his worshipper, which must remain to the end in *religion*, cannot (so Bradley and Bosanquet hold) be regarded as the last word in *metaphysics*; and thus the ultimate Reality, of which they usually speak as 'the Absolute', cannot be God, if by God be meant, as usually in the language of religion, Another than us, towards whom we can stand in a *personal* relation.

A thoroughgoing criticism of our conceptions, such as Bradley has attempted to carry out in his chief work, *Appearance and Reality*, will make plain (so it is contended by these philosophers) that the very notion of a 'self' is riddled through and through with contradictions, and thus cannot be rightly used for the elucidation of the nature of ultimate Reality; for, according to them, our only criterion of ultimate reality can be no other than *non-contradiction*. The argument which had convinced all idealists, 'subjective' and 'objective' alike, that it is impossible to make any intelligible affirmation respecting an *object* without implying its relation to a *subject*, we cannot (they hold) with a good intellectual conscience stop short of pushing farther than it was carried by those

who do not regard it as applicable to individual *persons*. An individual personality only has meaning in relation to the personality of other individual persons, members of a community within which they all enjoy mutual rights and claim from one another the performance of mutual duties. If personality be attributed to God, he must of necessity be regarded as a member of such a community, and not as the 'Supreme Being' in whom all finite beings, individuals and communities alike, 'live and move and have their being'. Yet, if God be less than this, he is not what we mean by God. Thus personality must be denied to God and cannot be regarded as the description of what is profoundest and most significant even in the nature of man.[1]

[1] See for all this the relevant portions of Bradley's *Appearance and Reality* (2nd ed. 1902, pp. 331 ff.), and of his later *Essays on Truth and Reality* (pp. 432 ff., 448 ff.), also Bosanquet's two volumes of Gifford Lectures on *The Principle of Individuality and Value* and *The Value and Destiny of the Individual*. Compare the present writer's *God and Personality* (especially pp. 100 ff., 105 ff., 124 ff., 138 ff.) and *Divine Personality and Human Life* (especially Lecture IX); also my article on 'Bosanquet's Philosophy of Religion' in the *Hibbert Journal* for October, 1923.

Bradley and Bosanquet are not indeed in all respects at one in their philosophy of religion; but their differences depend rather on dissimilarities of temperament between the two thinkers than upon any confessed divergence between their philosophical views. Two important matters in regard to which their respective attitudes are by no means identical are the compatibility of the practice of religion with their philosophy and the prospect of a future life beyond the grave for individual persons. I would refer to the discussion

In view of these contentions of the two later protagonists of British absolute idealism it will be plain that the suspicions aroused at an earlier stage of its history that it might be found inconsistent with the recognition of a genuine personality in either God or man, and therefore with the ultimate reality of the relation between God and man involved in what we commonly call religion[1], were confirmed by the subsequent development of that philosophy in the hands of men less trammelled than the thinkers of an earlier generation by traditions derived from a period as yet innocent of the power of Hegelian dialectic to resolve even distinctions which might well seem too stubborn for any process of thought to abolish. It was thus to be expected that in opposition to this kind of idealism there should arise a school of *personal idealists* concerned expressly to defend the refusal to carry farther the reasoning whereby they themselves had been led to deny the existence of a material world independent of the mind which perceives and understands it to

of this subject in my second series of Gifford Lectures, on *Divine Personality and Human Life* (Allen & Unwin, 1920), pp. 252, 253.

[1] Ultimate reality is, indeed, denied to *any* relation in the philosophy of Bradley; but notwithstanding his assertion (in making which he is profoundly in earnest) that 'there is nothing more real than what comes in religion' (*Appearance and Reality*, 2nd ed., p. 449) it would seem that the relation of man to God is doubly unreal, in so far as 'God is *not* a finite person' and can therefore not stand in a relation to a finite person, as one finite person can to another.

the point at which the ultimate reality of individual persons apart from their relations to the persons and things from which they distinguish themselves must be in like manner denied.[1]

[1] See Additional Note C.

VI

PERSONAL IDEALISM AND KINDRED POSITIONS

THE school of thought to which I referred in the concluding sentences of the last lecture as professing *Personal* in distinction from *Absolute* Idealism announced its appearance in the field by the publication of a collection of essays[1] which included contributions from Professor G. F. Stout, the distinguished psychologist, and from Dr. F. C. S. Schiller, afterwards well known as a champion of what is called Pragmatism. The theological application of the principle of Personal Idealism was entrusted to Dr. Hastings Rashdall, afterwards Dean of Carlisle.[2]

There was no one in England who during the earlier years of the present century upheld more strenuously than Rashdall the independence of divine and human personality over against one another as a truth which it was essential for a truly rational and ethical religion to affirm. Nevertheless he taught that human personalities, although, when once created, they must be regarded as enjoying the same kind of independence of the Divine Spirit that each human personality claims in respect of every other, were created by God and possessed nothing that they had not originally received from him. This doctrine

[1] *Personal Idealism*, 1902.

[2] B. 1858; d. 1924.

distinguished Rashdall's view from the kindred theory of a Cambridge philosopher, John McTaggart Ellis McTaggart,[1] who ascribed an even more thoroughgoing independence to individual persons, in that, while holding them to form a system the unity of which is as real as are the differences among its members, he not only denied personality to that system, but disagreed with Rashdall in refusing to assert the existence of any supreme member of the system upon which the others were ultimately dependent. Rather, according to McTaggart, was every person a fundamental and eternal differentiation or 'primary part' of the Absolute Unity, each on a level with every other.[2]

If the British absolute idealism against which the 'personal idealists' were protesting had behind it the great German thinkers who succeeded Kant, and especially Hegel,[3] so the personal idealists themselves at any rate derived encouragement in their protest from the writings of a German critic of Hegel who, when *Personal Idealism* appeared, had not long passed away, namely Hermann Lotze. Lotze had affirmed that personality in man was but a pale shadow of that perfect personality which we must attribute to

[1] B. 1866; d. 1925.

[2] *Studies in Hegelian Cosmology* (1901), ch. 2; *The Nature of Existence*, ii, p. 120. See C. D. Broad; obituary notice in *Proceedings of the British Academy*, xiii, 307 ff.

[3] McTaggart, it must here be noted, was himself a Hegelian, and held that his own view was consistent with the true interpretation of Hegel's teaching.

God. According to him the essence of personality lay not in relation to other persons, but in an 'immediate self-existence' known in self-consciousness.[1] Thus the difficulty felt by others in the ascription of personality to a Being which, whether regarded as transcendent or as immanent, could not be supposed to be confronted by another being of the same sort, did not exist for him. Infinity and personality were not in his eyes, as in those of many, mutually inconsistent predicates. On the contrary he could declare that since 'full Personality is possible only for the Infinite, perfect Personality is in God only',[2] a declaration which has enjoyed great favour and been frequently quoted by British apologists for Christian theism since the date of the appearance in 1887 of an English translation of the Göttingen professor's *Mikrokosmus*.[3]

But what is, in my judgement, a more powerful defence of the ascription of personality to God was put forward, almost contemporaneously with the publication of the translation of Lotze's *Mikrokosmus*, in the two great works of a veteran English thinker, the Unitarian divine, James Martineau,[4] entitled respectively *Types of Ethical Theory*[5] and *A Study of Religion*.[6] When these appeared, their author was already past his eightieth year. He belonged to the

[1] *Mikrokosmus*, ix. 4, § 5 (Eng. tr. ii, p. 687).
[2] Ibid. 4, §§ 4, 5 (Eng. tr. ii, pp. 685, 688).
[3] By Elizabeth Hamilton and E. E. Constance Jones.
[4] B. 1805; d. 1900. [5] 1885. [6] 1888.

generation of Mill, whose friendly critic he had been, and he used, as was natural, the philosophical dialect of that generation. Thus to young men trained in the school of Green—as were most of the Oxford undergraduates of my own age who were studying philosophy at the time when the works which I have mentioned were published—these inevitably seemed old fashioned, and on this account injustice was, I think, done by us at first to the solid value of their contents. That of the first-mentioned work was, however, appreciated and commended to us by one who was at that date becoming the most influential among the Oxford philosophical teachers of his day, John Cook Wilson.[1]

This remarkable man died in 1915, having published scarcely anything himself on philosophical subjects; and to posterity he will be known only through the notes of his lectures put together by the piety of a pupil and friend in two volumes bearing the title *Statement and Inference*.[2] In the second of these volumes, however, is included[3] a most suggestive address on the argument for the existence of God which may be drawn from the existence in ourselves of a sense of reverence; an argument which, though conceived and presented by Cook Wilson in a highly original manner, is closely akin in spirit to that set forth a few years earlier by Martineau. Martineau's

[1] B. 1849; d. 1915. Prof. of Logic at Oxford 1889–1913.
[2] 1926.
[3] Vol. ii, pp. 835 ff., 'Rational Grounds of Belief in God'.

sure insight into the facts of our moral experience whereby, as he says,[1] 'in the act of conscience we are immediately introduced to a Higher than ourselves that gives us what we feel', supplied a basis in experience for a genuine theism which was welcomed by many who were not so completely under the spell of the absolute idealists as to turn a deaf ear to any philosophy that did not speak their language. His contribution to religious thought was indeed of the highest importance. For it carried a step farther[2] the contention of Kant that in our inexpugnable consciousness of moral obligation, a consciousness impossible to explain by any alien principle, whether of natural causation or of hedonistic calculus—we have an unshakable basis, if not for a speculative theology, yet for a practical religious conviction which may serve as the inspiration of the whole of life, whereof the speculative or theoretical activity is never more than a department.

Kant himself, in his anxiety lest the intrinsic obligation of the moral law should be in any degree diminished by language which might be taken to describe it as a command that might, had the divine Legislator been so pleased, have been other than it is; and lest it should be thought that its obligatoriness might be relaxed, like the rigour of an earthly sovereign's law, in favour of those who should

[1] *A Study of Religion*, ii, p. 27.

[2] Cf. the present writer's *Divine Personality and Human Life*, p. 123.

please the imponent of it by expressions of devotion and attachment; was meticulously careful to insist that the representation of the Moral Law as a divine command is rather a symbolic picture of it than a description of its true nature. Yet sometimes, as when he admits[1] that the feeling of reverence, which he declares to be especially due to the Moral Law, can only rightly be felt for a *person*, he comes very near to taking the step which was explicitly taken, as we have seen, by Martineau.

In Martineau then we find a philosophy of religion which agreed with Kant's in basing religion on ethics and in appealing to the inexpugnable consciousness of moral obligation as decisive against a naturalism which should leave no room for any object transcending the world of sense-experience such as religion seems to demand. A like appeal to the moral consciousness was made by Ritschlianism, which, towards the end of the nineteenth century, was beginning to affect, not indeed popular religious thought in England, but certainly that of professed students of theology there; although at first, speaking generally, rather in the Nonconformist churches than in the Church of England.

This type of thought traced its descent from Kant, and followed him in closely connecting religion with ethics. It went beyond him however, though in a direction which he had certainly indicated by pro-

[1] *Kritik der praktischen Vernunft* (*Werke*, ed. Hartenstein, v. 81, 82, 91; ed. Berlin, v. 76, 77, 87).

claiming a complete divorce of theology from metaphysics. Ritschlianism turned the edge of naturalistic criticism by denying that the propositions of theology could claim to be *judgements of existence*, which might conflict with those of natural science or of history as statements of purely objective facts. They were rather to be classed as *judgements of value* and ranked with moral judgements, which affirm, as Kant had insisted, not what *is* but what *ought to be*. It is not to be doubted that the large measure of support accorded to this contention in the field of the philosophy of religion contributed to the temporary success in a wider sphere of the 'pragmatism' which at the turn of the century was introduced into the philosophical schools by the celebrated American psychologist, William James.[1]

'Pragmatism' made its first appearance before the English public in Dr. Schiller's contribution to the book of essays called *Personal Idealism* to which I have already referred.[2] It may be said to have attempted to extend to *all* judgements whatsoever that character of being judgements of *value* which the Ritschlians had attributed to those made in the

[1] B. 1842; d. 1910.
The Gifford Lectures delivered at Edinburgh in 1901–2 by this noteworthy man on *The Varieties of Religious Experience* were important as a pioneer work in the serious and scientific study of religious psychology as a subject of curiosity and investigation altogether apart from any design either to defend or to attack the truth of particular religious doctrines.

[2] His essay was entitled 'Axioms as Postulates'.

spheres of taste, morality, and religion. I am not here concerned with this doctrine, once so much talked of among students of philosophy in the English-speaking countries, as a general account of the nature of truth. I shall confine myself to the consideration of its influence upon religious thought.

This influence was for a time considerable and not altogether healthy. The brilliant essay called *The Will to Believe*[1] and others of James's earlier writings no doubt did good service in drawing attention to the legitimacy of faith and its place in human life as the presupposition of all knowledge. These truths were familiar enough to theologians (and had been recently pointed out in *Lux Mundi*),[2] but had perhaps been less fully recognized by students of philosophy. The writings of James also reminded men of the inadequacy of a materialistic determinism to explain the facts revealed by a careful study of the history of individual minds. In both these ways they encouraged religion in its defiance of the naturalism which threatened to leave no room for any spiritual spontaneity and supported it in its assertion of the reality and value of experiences which it had been the fashion with the dominant school of men of science to treat as being mere fancy and illusion. So far religion and theology were in James's debt.

[1] 1897.

[2] In H. Scott Holland's essay on 'Faith', the first in the book; cf. the same author's posthumously published work, *The Philosophy of Faith* (1920).

On the other hand, the 'pragmatism' which James associated with his defence of faith and of freedom offered a serious temptation to apologists for religion. It suggested that by emancipating religion from any need to prove the truth of its doctrines to historians or men of science and permitting it to find their sufficient justification in their beneficial effects—and this might sometimes come to mean little more than their appeal to individual taste—believers could secure their cherished convictions from the assaults of naturalism.

It is here to be observed that, although pragmatism was associated, at its first appearance in England, with a revolt against absolute idealism which might seem to have marked a beginning of reaction against the *immanentism* involved in that philosophy, it could nevertheless be considered as being, when applied to the theory of religion, an extremer form of immanentism than absolute idealism itself. For, while absolute idealism, in its theological aspect, was, as we saw, committed to seeking the religious values within rather than beyond the world of our present experience, it nevertheless allowed them a transcendent validity not only in relation to the individual consciousness but also in relation to mankind considered in its empirical or phenomenal aspect; this being indeed the main point of distinction between the philosophy of religion associated with absolute idealism and that implied in Comte's 'religion of humanity'.

Pragmatism, on the other hand, as the most prominent of its English champions, Dr. Schiller, explicitly allowed,[1] was a revival of the ancient doctrine of Protagoras that 'man was the measure of all things, of things that are that they are and of things that are not that they are not'.[2] Its theological tendency was therefore not merely *immanentist* but even *subjectivist*. Its attitude to religion thus differs from that of naturalism itself only in the circumstance that, by denying that there is any truth which is not measured by reference to human purposes, it did not, after the fashion of naturalism, disparage theology, as concerned with a mere phenomenon of human consciousness, in contrast with the objectivity of natural science, conceived as a revelation of facts as they are, independently of their effect on the emotions, desires, and volitions of the human beings who discover them.

This tendency to subjectivism in religious thought at the end of the last and the beginning of the present century may perhaps be best observed in the history of Roman Catholic Modernism, in which there was manifested, contemporaneously with but more or less independently of the philosophical movement in the English-speaking countries represented by James and Schiller, a way of thinking to which the name of

[1] See his *Plato or Protagoras?* (1908). Dr. Schiller's choice of the word 'Humanism' to describe his own philosophy is explained by his adoption of the Protagorean standpoint.

[2] Plato, *Theaetetus*, 152 A.

'pragmatism', in the sense given to it by these writers, might be no less appropriately applied. For, although this history might seem to have little immediate relevance to that of religious thought in England, a country where only a comparatively small minority of the population adheres to the Roman Catholic Church, that country contributed to the Modernist movement within that Church one of its most remarkable personalities, George Tyrrell,[1] while the effect of the movement itself upon Englishmen interested in religion outside of the Roman communion, both by way of attraction and of repulsion, was by no means inconsiderable. Tyrrell, it may be said in passing, was by birth (and temperament) an Irishman, and so a native of a country where the majority of the people is Roman Catholic; but, as he sprang from a Protestant family, going over to Rome as a youth,—and the division between Protestants and Roman Catholics in Ireland is very sharp—and as moreover he spent the greater part of his active life in England as a Jesuit priest of the English Province, he may be fairly reckoned for our present purpose as an Englishman. As an Englishman for these purposes we may reckon also another influential theologian, who was of foreign origin on his father's side, but a Scotchman on his mother's, and who played a considerable part in the same Modernist movement, although his ever-increasing aversion for the subjectivist trend in its thought left him eventually

[1] B. 1861; d. 1909.

outside its camp. I mean the Baron Friedrich von Hügel,[1] of whom I shall have more to say hereafter.

The special importance to an understanding of the subjectivist tendency in religious thought of the history of Roman Catholic Modernism lies in the illustration which that history affords of the danger, inherent in this tendency, that those who follow it should not merely find in effectiveness or utility an evidence of truth, but should, after the manner of pragmatism, identify truth itself with effectiveness or utility. This danger was peculiarly great in the case of the Roman Catholic Modernists, because they were in violent reaction against the scholasticism which was entrenched in the traditional teaching of their Church. Now, according to the scholastic epistemology, the object of finite knowledge is always independent of the act of the mind whereby it is known. The Roman Catholic schools had remained faithful to this doctrine and had not been affected in their adhesion to it even by Kant's criticism of it under the name of 'dogmatism', still less by the development of that criticism in the idealism of his successors. It was not indeed true that all the Modernists, in their revolt from the philosophy which their Church had newly canonized in the Encyclical of Pope Leo XIII *Aeterni Patris*, recommending to the scholars among the faithful the study of St. Thomas Aquinas, had embraced the

[1] B. 1852; d. 1924.

tenets of pragmatism. It was not even true that they were all committed to a subjectivist theory of knowledge. But the Encyclical *Pascendi gregis*, by which Pius X in 1907 condemned Modernism, and which was beyond question a very able document, while it nowhere mentioned pragmatism by name, laid great stress on the adoption of a non-scholastic epistemology as the fundamental characteristic of Modernist speculation. Nor was this line of assault by any means without justification. For the dismissal of the scholastic affirmation of the independence of the object of finite knowledge upon the mind's act in knowing it was no doubt in fact intimately connected with the tendency to immanentism which was certainly apparent in the literature of the Modernist movement. This tendency to immanentism was inspired by a very intelligible desire to abandon the aloofness of Roman Catholic philosophy and theology from the atmosphere of modern thought outside of the Church; while by some, though not by all the Modernists, it was carried to a point at which it became difficult to reconcile it with that attitude of humble receptiveness and worship which is bound up with the tradition of Catholic, not to say of Christian piety.

It was the development among the Modernists of a definitely immanentist theology, exaggerated in some to an extreme subjectivism, that led, as I have already indicated, the most eminent of those Roman

Catholics in England who were in close touch with the Modernist movement, Baron Friedrich von Hügel, gradually to dissociate himself from it, while maintaining relations of personal friendship with some of its leaders. On its earlier stages he, as a pioneer of Biblical criticism among his fellow Roman Catholics, a friend of the celebrated French Modernist scholar, Alfred Loisy, and on terms of close intimacy with Tyrrell, had exercised a considerable influence. Paul Sabatier, the well-known biographer of St. Francis of Assisi, had indeed described him[1] as the 'lay-bishop', *l'évêque laïque*, of the Modernists. To the grand principle, for which he and they had contended together, of freedom for science and scholarship, he remained to the end entirely faithful. But he was profoundly convinced that religion could not dispense with faith in a transcendent object of worship, whose prevenient operation must be acknowledged if the religious life was to be understood or indeed carried on to any purpose; and he became more and more critical of every line of thought which threatened to cast doubt upon the necessity of such a faith to any Christianity which should be worthy of the name.

Moreover, while ever keenly alive to the perils to which, as all history and experience showed, intellectual and spiritual freedom was exposed at the hands of ecclesiastical rulers, he was no less sure that, without the 'incarnational' principle embodied in religious

[1] *Les Modernistes*, p. li.

institutions, and without the discipline of loyalty to constituted authorities, religion could never bring forth its fairest fruits or diffuse its blessings over the whole of human life and society. Thus, while retaining the most affectionate sympathy with individuals whose theoretical immanentism and subjectivism he could not share and whose revolutionary action he could not approve, and while always ready to show his sympathy—often in practical forms—with those who were suffering for conscience' sake at the hands of ecclesiastical authority—he himself, despite his undissembled acceptance of the results of critical inquiry even when inconsistent with ancient and venerable traditions, stood firmly on the ground of faith in a transcendent Reality revealed through historical happenings and operative through sacraments and institutions.

Little known beyond a small circle until the last years of his life, Friedrich von Hügel came in the end to exert a remarkable influence upon thoughtful and religious minds in Great Britain, though perhaps a greater outside his own communion than within it. It might be expected that this influence, largely due as it was to the attractiveness of his singular personality, would not be felt by those who can only come into touch with this through his writings as it was by the friends who knew him in his lifetime; yet, by means of his very individual and characteristic style, difficult and un-English though it is, that personality is in some measure enabled to

produce an impression even upon his readers not so dissimilar from that which it produced upon those who enjoyed his acquaintance as is often the case with men of the like magnetic gifts. He was in a true sense a religious genius, who combined with the passionate earnestness of one whose life may without exaggeration be said to have been, in the Scriptural phrase, 'hid with Christ in God' a wide erudition and a rich and many-sided culture, which the circumstances of his descent and upbringing had rendered peculiarly cosmopolitan. He also united in a rare degree a deep appreciation of, and a constant habit of participation in the traditional practices of Christian and Catholic piety with an independent criticism of traditional doctrines and views of history which led him to embrace opinions often very far removed from those which had generally prevailed among the orthodox. But, from our present point of view, what is most to be observed about this distinguished man, whose personal friendship it was my great privilege to enjoy, and to whose place in English religious thought I am on that account specially interested in calling attention, is, I think, his attitude towards the immanentist tendency which, as I have attempted in these lectures to show, was generally characteristic of theological movements in England during the last seventy or eighty years. Of this tendency von Hügel was a severe critic and eventually an uncompromising opponent. In his younger contemporary, Hastings

Rashdall,[1] also an outstanding figure in the British theological world of this century, and also one to whose intimacy I had the honour of being admitted, a like aversion from the prevalent tendency was associated with, and perhaps even based upon, a mentality constitutionally devoid of the mystic's passion for union with the object of religious devotion, a passion which is the inspiration of so much theological immanentism. In Friedrich von Hügel, on the contrary, there was to be found, along with his hostility to immanentism, a sympathetic understanding of the mystical temperament sufficient to enable him to produce in *The Mystical Element in Religion*[2] a work which may even be called classical on the subject of the type of religious experience proper to that temperament, as illustrated by the life of St. Catherine of Genoa.

In consequence of this sympathy of his with what he called the 'mystical element in religion'—under which head he was apt to class all interior or experimental religion, without perhaps sufficiently distinguishing the type which is from the type which is not inspired by the above-mentioned passion for union with the object of religious devotion[3]—von Hügel's influence has been, notwithstanding his hostility to any theoretical immanentism in religion, felt by some who undoubtedly themselves exhibit a

[1] See above, pp. 123 f. [2] 1908.

[3] Cp. the present writer's *Pascal's Philosophy of Religion* (1929), pp. 34 ff.

tendency to immanentism, but chiefly in the form of discontent with what may be called *inferential* theology. Persons of this description are conscious that proofs of the existence of God, historical evidences of the Christian revelation, and the like do not come home, to use Burke's famous phrase, 'to their business and bosoms', and they are correspondingly curious about the experience of those who, like the mystics, can report an *immediate* awareness of the presence of God in their souls. Such an awareness would, they think, render them independent of external arguments and investigations; and, it must be added, would relieve them from the necessity of taking account of external rules which seem to 'crib, cabin, and confine' their *self-expression* by considerations which, like the proofs and the evidences, leave them cold and seem to have no relevance to their own individual needs and desires. Von Hügel himself was always and, towards the end of his life, increasingly insistent on the unwholesomeness of any isolation of the mystical element in religion from the 'institutional' and the 'intellectual', nor can any one be regarded as in any real sense his disciple who allows himself, in his cultivation of interior religion, deliberately to despise or neglect either learning or discipline. But the widespread interest in mysticism which has attracted many to the study of his writings has been none the less often associated with a stress upon *self-expression* which is characteristic of much modern thought and feeling, and which undoubtedly belongs to the immanentist tendency

which he was so keenly desirous to correct, on the one hand by a realistic epistemology, and on the other by pressing the necessity of the historical and institutional factors to the sane and balanced living of the Christian life.

For the present I propose to take the opportunity offered by the occurrence of the word 'self-expression' in my last paragraph of tracing a line of reflection noticeable among British as among other thinkers and writers of the last few decades and showing its connexion with the history which I have been attempting to narrate in this and the preceding lecture.

The idealistic school to the study of which the fifth lecture of this course was devoted, the school of Green and Caird, of Bradley and Bosanquet, had said much of *self-realization*. They were accustomed to describe by this term the goal of human life, as they conceived it. This description was closely connected with their general tendency to seek the religious and ethical values rather within than without the process of civilization. They did not, of course, deny that the self might be able to realize itself only on the condition of denying to itself the realization of certain of its desires and aspirations. On the contrary, it was an essential part of their message to insist upon this possibility. The 'organic' theory of society, which they were so greatly concerned to maintain, involved the restriction of each individual member of society to a particular function and the

corresponding abandonment by him of other functions than that which constituted his special vocation. Hence, in all cases in which, as usually happens, the performance of the social function allotted to an individual citizen does not exhaust his capacities or potentialities, a full self-realization, as these philosophers understood it, was only attainable by that individual citizen through his identification of himself with the society as with a larger self, to other members of which he must leave the fulfilment of functions which he may have the capacity to discharge as well as they, but for which the exercise of his vocation affords him no opportunity. In so leaving them he nevertheless, as a member of the same body with those who actually perform them, recognizes their discharge of them as his own and as thus constituting a part of his own self-realization.

Further, as we saw, to the school of thinkers of whom I am speaking the realization of oneself through the sacrifice of oneself—the finding of one's life through the losing of it, to employ the phraseology of the Gospel[1]—was the grand principle wherein alone was to be found the clue to the universal process of Spirit manifested alike in nature and in the mind of man. Moreover, the most eminent exponents of this philosophy were in no way disposed to give encouragement to the suggestion that the actual road to the fullest possible self-realization was any other than that indicated by the general moral tradition of

[1] Mark viii. 35.

Christendom. Even if they were sometimes inclined to minimize the ascetic element in that tradition, it was only after the fashion already set by Protestant critics of the Catholic system and its monastic institutions.

Yet one may conjecture that the emphasis laid by this teaching of the idealist philosophers upon self-realization, however they themselves interpreted the self-realization of which they spoke, contributed something to the revolt against the moral tradition of Christendom, on which I touched in my introductory lecture and which made itself evident in many quarters at the turn of the century.

The teaching of Kant, which had been the starting-point of their philosophy, had indeed, so far as it laid stress on the consciousness of *obligation* as the fundamental moral fact, reinforced the Christian tradition at the very point whereat, as we shall see, it provoked the later reaction against itself. But it was otherwise, so far as Kant regarded the law by which we found ourselves thus *obliged* as no mere command of Another (though we might for certain purposes legitimately represent it to ourselves as a divine ordinance) but rather as the expression of our own reason. According to Kant, we may, as I said just now, think of this law as prescribed to us by God, but must ever bear in mind that only through our own reason and conscience can we know what God prescribes, since the sole thought of God that we can reasonably frame is that of a Reason untrammelled by a

recalcitrant sensibility and equipped with power to realize its aims.

Now in the ethics both of Green and of Bradley this doctrine of *autonomy*, which was no doubt an important element in the ethics of Kant, was intimately associated with the conception of a *good* shared by all members of the community to which we recognize ourselves as belonging, and the *obligation* to pursue this common good is assumed rather than shown to flow from the consciousness that it is ours in common with the other members of the community. In thus elevating the notion of a Common Good to the central position in the theory of Morality, and in envisaging this rather than the consciousness of Duty as the ruling principle of conduct, Green and his school may be said to have gone back, as it were, from Kant to Rousseau, whose doctrine of the *volonté générale* was certainly not without influence on Kant's own ethics; while, through the conception of Autonomy, they linked the Kantian teaching with a democratic political philosophy which traces its own descent from Rousseau, and in which the notion of Authority, the correlative of Obligation, finds but a precarious footing. For the only authority which this philosophy recognizes in the community is recognized on the ground that the community's will is each citizen's own real will; and it is difficult to entertain towards what is only so conceived that feeling of *reverence* which Kant would have men cherish for the moral law, and apart from

which it is easy to fall into regarding, if not self-interest, at any rate the fullest possible exercise of one's own capacities, as the supreme object of endeavour. Such a position is clearly in harmony with immanentism and out of harmony with that recognition of a divine authority in the standards of conduct publicly acknowledged which had been in the past the standard of most men's moral judgements. This recognition Kant had retained, while not allowing it a speculative, but a practical value only. It was, as we saw, reaffirmed by Martineau on what may fairly be called a Kantian basis; but it was bound to fade from the minds of men under the influence of the thoroughly *immanentist* philosophy prevalent in many and divers shapes at the beginning of the twentieth century.[1]

In the shape which immanentism assumed at the hands of the idealistic philosophers of whom I spoke in my last lecture, the lack of a divine authority in the moral law might easily be overlooked. They regarded the recognition of a common good not, with Kant, as attained by means of inference from the consciousness of obligation, but rather as the source of that consciousness; and they held the common good to be principally realized in the State. The State, as was natural to a way of thinking formed in the school of Hegel, was invested for them with a halo of divinity or at least of such sacred dignity as was ascribed by the men of the Oxford Movement not to the State, but to the Church. To

[1] Cp. my *Divine Personality and Human Life*, p. 131.

Hegel the State had been, as it was in an earlier age to the Englishman Hobbes, a 'mortal God';[1] nor could the intensive study of Plato's *Republic* which was characteristic of the philosophical curriculum of the University of Oxford, the home of this type of British thought,[2] fail to encourage this profound reverence for the community whose ideal was there sketched. The organized embodiment of the common good might well be supposed to provide an authority to which the private wills of individuals might yield themselves up with a truly religious devotion. Nor was this the less the case, when the community which was thus regarded was envisaged not as simply identical with the national State, although for the purposes of ordinary life usually represented thereby, but as a wider and more spiritual fellowship. I do not desire to assert a fundamental difference of view in this matter between Hegel and the English school of thought which had learned so much from him. But there is certainly a difference of emphasis, having behind it the whole difference of national history and tradition which parts the Englishman from the German. For the British idealists, while deeply concerned to assert the spiritual significance of the State against those who inclined to disparage it in contrast

[1] *Leviathan*, c. 17. Cp. Hegel, *Phil. des Rechts* (*Werke*, viii), §§ 258, 272, 331.

[2] A study, the beginnings of which were, it is worth noticing, encouraged by Tractarians who saw in the ideal commonwealth of the Greek philosopher a prophecy of the Christian Church.

with that of the Church; and also to defend the State's claim on the devotion of its citizens against the individualism associated with the utilitarian tradition; yet shared their countrymen's characteristic dislike of the State's interference with private life and their shrinking from what seems to them an exaggerated deference to the authorities who actually exercise its functions.

Now against the tendency to find in the commonwealth, whether envisaged after the German or after the English fashion, something of a divinity which could impart what I may call a quality of sacredness to a law based upon the recognition of its claim to the allegiance of the individual citizen, a reaction had already set in, both in England and in Europe generally, before the outbreak of the World War in 1914. I will only refer, to show what is in my mind, to the trend of thought and feeling which found expression in the dramas of Ibsen and in the writings of Nietzsche; to the criticism by scholars like Gierke in Germany and Maitland[1] in England, as an assumption unjustified by history, of the doctrine that all communities other than the State ultimately derived from its sanction whatever claim they might make upon the loyalty of their members; and, lastly, to the appearance, over against the State-Socialism which had inspired earlier movements for the reorganization of society on a basis other than the competitive,

[1] B. 1850; d. 1906. Professor of the Laws of England, Cambridge.

both of what was called Syndicalism and of the anarchism of the great Russian novelist Tolstoy, an anarchism equally individualistic and hostile to the claims of the State with that of Nietzsche, but strongly contrasted with it in its altruism and puritanism. Of Tolstoy, indeed, it may be said that his ethical teaching was on the whole in line with the most rigorist type of Christian morality, although leaving no more room for the authority of the Church than for that of the State; and of the Syndicalists on the other hand that they armed the Churches with a new weapon against the encroachments of the State. But the other influences of which I have spoken were unquestionably hostile to acquiescence in the authority of the Christian tradition, and favourable to a doctrine of *self-expression* as the supreme principle of human conduct which may seem to mark the extreme limit of the development of immanentism which we have been tracing throughout the history of the period with which these lectures are concerned.

VII

THE REACTION FROM IMMANENTISM

THE effects of the World War, which closed the epoch with which I have been dealing in previous lectures and opened that in which we are living to-day, were felt in the sphere of religious thought, and that in three ways.

In the first place the War encouraged the revolt against the Christian ethical tradition, to the beginnings of which in the preceding years I called attention at the end of my last lecture.

In the second place the War dealt a mortal blow to the optimistic religious immanentism which boasted itself to be able to discover within the actual system of civilization the spiritual values sought by earlier generations either in another world altogether or in a system which, though manifested in this world, originated in an intervention from without by the powers of another world in the affairs of this.

Lastly, the War promoted a revival of interest in the quest of a revelation from without of values which men despaired of discovering within a process of civilization which had issued in so tremendous a catastrophe.

I will deal with these three results of the World War in order. But, before doing so, I must remind my readers that my theme is religious thought in my own country, England. Much of what I shall say

will also be true of other countries which shared with England the experience of the World War, and which participate in the general movement from which, owing to multiplied facilities of communication and the consequent ever-increasing uniformity of the material environment of civilized life, it is now less easy than ever before for any particular nation to remain isolated. Nevertheless, it is probable, or rather certain, that in some respects the form taken in each country by that general movement will be qualified by the special background supplied to it by the peculiar history of that country and of its culture.

The first result of the impact of the World War on religious thought which I have mentioned was important and far-reaching; but it affected the attitude of the general public towards religion rather than the theories of philosophers and scholars. The latter were, of course, already familiar with the difficulty of reconciling the belief in divine providence with the facts of human history and the acknowledgement of the Christian law—that we should love our neighbours as ourselves and count as our neighbours all men with whom we have to do—with serving in wars waged by our own nation against others. The problem was at most vividly brought home to their minds by the conflict in which England was engaged during the years from August 1914 to November 1918. But there were many who were found by the War unprepared to face problems which had never been presented with a like urgency during

the long period of peace and prosperity which the country had recently enjoyed. During that period there had been wars indeed, but all in distant lands and (with the exception indeed of that in South Africa at the end of the last and the beginning of the present century) of no very long duration. They were, moreover, wars in which, for the most part, only the regular army and navy had been engaged. There had also for a long time past been a steady advance in the humanizing and refining of the national manners; while the increasing realization of the economic evils produced by the Industrial Revolution had evoked a philanthropic enthusiasm directed towards their amendment and removal which, even if it had not kept pace with the mischiefs which it was endeavouring to check, encountered nothing but approval and encouragement from public opinion.

For many then who had grown up in these surroundings and by whom the tragedies of older times were scarcely realized as belonging to the same world as that in which their own lot was cast, the War was destructive of their conventional respect for the claim of Christianity to be the guide of human conduct. Some, finding that the truthfulness, mercy, and purity recommended by Christian teachers were by common consent abandoned as impracticable in time of war, concluded that they could not after all be held to have the absolute value traditionally attributed to them. Others, in view of the acquiescence

of the authorized exponents of Christianity in all the belligerent countries both in the legitimacy of the War itself and the necessity of the means adopted by the military authorities for bringing it to a successful conclusion, made up their minds that the interest of professed Christians in the ideals which were put forward in Christian pulpits was insincere and hypocritical, and did but mask a more genuine devotion to the predominance of a particular nation or to the maintenance of the capitalistic system of society. Thus the War was bound to subvert in many quarters the established prejudices which had long held in check the advance of a thoroughgoing criticism of the code of ethics historically associated with Christianity, where these came into conflict with the suggestions of the new creed of self-realization which there was so much to encourage both in current philosophy and in the external conditions brought about by the immensely increased control of the material instruments of civilization due to the rapid advance of the natural sciences.

But this revolt against the principles of conduct the acknowledgement of which had been the mainstay of a regard for the traditional religion of Europe, in a generation which had lost or was losing faith in its doctrine of another world than this, was inevitably disastrous to the modern substitute for that religion, the optimistic conviction that the values affirmed by Christianity were being progressively realized in this world. While some who had more

or less acquiesced in this conviction were driven by the loss of it to despair altogether of the realization of these values in any world whatever, others, whose religion was of a higher quality, were impelled once more to look beyond this world for a peace and a glory which it cannot give. Thus was revived the thought that it is of the essence of religion that in it we have to do with the revelation of something quite other, *ganz anderes* (as a German theologian had lately said[1]), than any life which humanity could produce from its own resources; with the gracious revelation of a transcendent God, not with the crowning achievement of a civilization of whose by no means unintermittent progress in a small section of the human species our secular historians were ready to supply us with a wholly unmiraculous and purely naturalistic account.

It is not to be denied that this rehabilitation of a transcendent theology which in the preceding age would have seemed reactionary was aided by an abated confidence on the part of the natural sciences in their own power to make theology and philosophy superfluous by showing that there was nothing which could not be accounted for on the hypothesis that reality can be exhaustively described in the terms appropriate to those sciences. But zealous apologists for Christianity who spoke in the decade preceding the War of the 'bankruptcy of science' were premature in their rejoicings. The majestic

[1] R. Otto in *Das Heilige*.

progress of discovery and invention which is the glory of natural science fortunately showed no sign of slackening; while after the War the experiment was made on a vast scale in Russia—and made with no inconsiderable measure of success—of constructing a social order on a basis not merely secular, in the sense of dispensing with supernatural sanctions and ecclesiastical institutions, but definitely irreligious. For the Soviet régime has attempted to uproot as 'bourgeois ideology' those very values which, according to the philosophical immanentism of the nineteenth century, men might employ their religious imagination in variously symbolizing, but which themselves constituted the true object which secular society aims at realizing in life and conduct. In such a system what we commonly call 'science' is left, by the rejection of religion and of the great tradition of philosophy which belongs (like science itself) to Europe's inheritance from the ancient Greeks, to share with art alone among the main factors of the spiritual life of the old world the privilege of surviving in the new.

Absurd, however, as it is to speak of the 'bankruptcy of science', it is, as I said, true that there is an abatement of the old confidence of science in a certain direction. It is perhaps less confident than formerly of its adequacy to the task of attaining to a view of the universe which will at no point be incapable of statement in intelligible terms. It is certainly less confident of the validity of certain

presuppositions, especially of that of universal determinism, which were formerly regarded as essential to its claim to be the sufficient interpreter of the facts before us. But it would be prudent in the defenders of religion not to welcome too warmly the admission of indeterminacy in nature by certain men of science. For freedom, in any sense of the word in which it is the interest of religion to assert it, is something very different from indeterminacy, and would certainly not be at home in any universe but one wherein it is possible to count upon things acting according to 'laws which may not be broken'.

There is, however, no doubt that in England as well as elsewhere the reaction against the immanentism of the preceding period has sometimes taken the form of an emphasis on *irrationality* as a characteristic of genuine religion. This has been shown, for example, by the not always discriminating welcome accorded in England to the philosophy of religion expounded in the striking work of Rudolf Otto, *Das Heilige*. There is perhaps, however, no good ground for regarding the apprehension of that element of our experience to which Otto has given the useful name of *das Numinose* as falling any more than any other aspect of reality outside of the domain of reason. For reason, not only in religion but everywhere, is concerned in the interpretation of that which is immediately given and which cannot be derived from any element of experience other than itself.

A tendency, such as is here illustrated, to defend religion, while at the same time emphasizing its recalcitrance to reason, was not a new thing in English religious thought. It had recurred from time to time during the period with which these lectures have to do; for example, about forty years ago, in the brief vogue of a clever writer without academic training, Benjamin Kidd by name.[1] In his *Social Evolution*[2] Kidd exhibited religion at once as opposed to reason and as the active principle of development and progress in the history of society. But his use of the word 'reason' was not justified by the usage of the thinkers who in his time were already the most influential in the British schools of philosophy and who had inherited from Kant the attribution to reason of the moral imperative, the authority of which could certainly not be explained as naturally to be inferred from the data of sense-experience.

The point, however, to which Kidd, though in not very well-chosen language, had called attention, was put with greater force and subtlety, as part of a larger argument for theism, by a very remarkable man, one of the chief English statesmen of the last generation, Arthur James Balfour.[3]

Balfour's philosophical writings may be said to have had all of them but one theme: the importance of attending not only to the *rational grounds* but to the *non-rational causes* of belief. If one did so attend, he

[1] B. 1858; d. 1916. [2] 1894.
[3] B. 1848; d. (as Earl of Balfour) 1930.

argued, one found that men of science, while ready to find in what he called[1] 'psychological climate' a sufficient explanation of their neighbours' religious convictions, frequently overlooked the precisely similar prejudice which the indisputable successes of natural science in its own field created in favour of a philosophy founded upon 'scientific' principles.[2] Yet in fact the convictions of men of science have, like those of other men, *causes* which are not *reasons*; and the results of which, on the naturalistic assumptions made by many men of science, can only coincide with objective truth by sheer accident; nor can any ground for confidence in them be found except in the faith which religion suggests in 'an intelligent purpose behind the unthinking powers of material nature'. 'All creeds', says Balfour,[3] which admit no such purpose, 'are intrinsically incoherent. In the order of causation they base reason upon unreason. In the order of logic they involve conclusions which discredit their own premises.' Nor does an appeal to the principle of selection proposed by Darwinism suffice to mitigate this condemnation. 'Why should faculties designed only to help primitive man or his animal progenitors successfully to breed and feed, be fitted to solve philosophic problems . . . useless and . . . remote. Why indeed do

[1] *Foundations of Belief*, ed. 1901, p. 218.

[2] Cp. the present writer's contribution to the British Academy's memoir of A. J. B., p. 8.

[3] *Theism and Humanism*, pp. 257 ff.

such problems occur to us? Why do we long for their solution?' If the naturalistic principles invoked by men of science fail to justify our confidence in that science itself, still less do they justify our confidence in our aesthetic or moral judgements. Such confidence presupposes a faith in the ultimate rationality of the world which issues in reason, a faith inconsistent with supposing that world to be other than the creation of a divine intelligence. Akin to Balfour's criticism of Naturalism was the more systematic work of James Ward,[1] contained in his two volumes of Gifford Lectures on *Naturalism and Agnosticism* (1899) and his later book, *The Realm of Ends* (1911). Both Balfour and Ward were educated at Cambridge; the latter became a professor in that University, the former, although his pursuits lay outside the academic limits in the world of national and international politics, was its Chancellor and in constant touch with its life. Each of these men, as well as an elder thinker, Henry Sidgwick,[2] who exerted a considerable influence over both and who married Balfour's sister, sought in belief in God a principle of coherence without which our other beliefs would come into mutual conflict. For Sidgwick it was what he called 'utilitarian duty'—that of seeking the greatest happiness of the greatest number—and 'self-interest' which could only be perfectly coincident on the assumption

[1] B. 1843; d. 1925.

[2] B. 1838; d. 1900; Professor of Moral Philosophy at Cambridge.

that there was a divine Governor of the universe. For Balfour it was the scientific account of the origin of the human mind and the value which we attach to truth, goodness, and beauty that could only be reconciled on the theistic hypothesis. For Ward it was what were, according to Naturalism, the two disparate series of 'phenomena' and 'epiphenomena' that required this same hypothesis to account for a correspondence between them.

These Cambridge thinkers—along with whom I may mention another distinguished representative of that University, Dr. Tennant,[1] to whose recently published *Philosophical Theology* I would call my readers' attention, and who is in many respects a disciple of Ward—stand apart from what I have called the immanentist tradition of the nineteenth century. They link the older fashion of thought which preceded the Kantian criticism of 'rational theology' and the subsequent Romantic movement with the reaction against the immanentist tradition which the present century is witnessing. In their presentation of their subject they often remind one of that older fashion of thought, inasmuch as they are inspired not by the consciousness of enjoying an immediate experience which transports them beyond the limits of the world which Naturalism can interpret, but rather by their sense of the intellectual unsatisfactoriness of the interpretation of the world which Naturalism offers. But the God in whom they would find or seek the clue to the enigma

[1] B. 1866; Fellow of Trinity College, Cambridge.

propounded by the incoherence of Naturalism is—like the God whom Otto describes as *ganz andere* or the God of the representation of that German 'theology of crisis' which is now attracting the sympathetic attention of many younger theologians in England as elsewhere—definitely a *transcendent* God.

In contrast with the idealism, largely inspired by Hegel, which dominated Oxford philosophy at the end of the last century, the Cambridge speculation to which I am now referring was little influenced by the philosophy of Kant's German successors, and indeed manifested a marked lack of sympathy with it. The conception of God which is found in Green's posthumous *Prolegomena to Ethics*, as the eternal consciousness which the consciousness of each human being 'reproduces' or 'realizes', and which constructs out of 'feelings' the intelligible world of objects with which in daily life and in the sciences we have to do—a conception which, as left by its author, undoubtedly calls for the clearing up of much that is ambiguous and unclear—was subjected to a very acute and damaging criticism by Sidgwick;[1] while Balfour in his *Foundations of Belief* devoted a chapter indeed to 'transcendental idealism', with an eye to what he described as the 'neo-Kantianism' of Green and Caird, but printed it in smaller type than that used in

[1] See *The Metaphysics of T. H. Green* (in *The Philosophy of Kant and other Lectures*, by the late H. Sidgwick, 1905). Sidgwick had been Green's schoolfellow at Rugby, and even as a boy had been bewildered by his friend's readiness to doubt the assumptions of common sense.

the rest of the book, with the suggestion that he did not expect or desire any one to trouble his head about it, if he did not feel himself especially drawn to do so.

Yet it would be extremely unjust to look upon these writers as merely reproducing an obsolete and pre-Kantian manner of philosophizing. They do indeed carry on an old English tradition in their distrust of the power of speculation to achieve a systematic view of the whole of reality.[1] But they also carry on an English tradition in avoiding the danger, which a more ambitious philosophy so often incurs, of losing touch with the common experience of ordinary men and with the assumptions which natural science takes over from that common experience. Indeed it is precisely from a clear perception of the real discrepancy between these assumptions and the results reached by natural science that the criticism of Naturalism by Balfour and Ward draws its peculiar force. Frequently this criticism is in essence identical with that of Green or other Oxford idealists, yet the latter, being couched in a language unfamiliar to those against whom it is directed, seems, as it were, to 'get home' less than the former.

[1] When a German student, who had chosen for the subject of his doctoral thesis the philosophy of Sidgwick, wrote to Sidgwick himself to ask him what his *Weltanschauung* was, since he could not discover it for himself in the English thinker's writings, Sidgwick characteristically replied on a postcard that he had not the slightest idea!

Moreover the Cambridge men must not be supposed to have ignored in the field of the philosophy of religion what I take to be the great lesson which theology has to learn from the Kantian criticism of the traditional proofs of God's existence, so as to have attempted to reach a justification of religion from premises which take no account of an experience specifically religious. I am not indeed sure whether such a charge might not plausibly be brought against Dr. Tennant; but it certainly cannot be justly alleged against Balfour. Balfour was, no doubt, discontented with the naturalistic philosophy which he found treated as orthodox by men of science whose conclusions in their own department of inquiry he had no inclination to dispute. But this was not due to any indifference on his part to their investigations. On the contrary he was in close touch with some of the leaders of scientific research, such as his brother-in-law the eminent physicist, Lord Rayleigh,[1] and his brother the embryologist, Francis Balfour,[2] whose early death was a notable loss to British science; and he was deeply interested in their work. It was due to his profound confidence in the supreme value, not only of aesthetic intuition and of moral loyalty, but of religious faith—a value which he was convinced could not belong to them if the 'scientific' account of their evolution was a complete explanation of their origin; if they had

[1] B. 1842; d. 1919.

[2] B. 1851; d. 1882. Fellow of Trinity College, Cambridge.

arisen, that is to say, in a godless world as by-products of a process unthinking and undesigned. In a recent work of very great importance, Professor A. E. Taylor's[1] Gifford Lectures, delivered in the University of St. Andrews and published under the title *The Faith of a Moralist*, there will be found a defence of faith in a transcendent God which, while it is in harmony with what is of most lasting value in Balfour's argument, is the work of an author who began his philosophical career as a disciple of Bradley,[2] and was, so to say, nursed at the breast of the great idealistic tradition which in the eyes of Balfour, though he was often nearer to it in his philosophizing than he thought, always remained something alien and perverse.

It is a matter of great moment at the present juncture that those engaged in the study of the philosophy of religion should not be so preoccupied with the inadequacy of a merely immanent conception of God to satisfy the religious needs of men in general, or to serve as the basis of a living Christianity in particular, that they should be willing to abandon the gains of the period which, extending from the French Revolution to the World War, was, as we have seen, characterized as regards theology by a strong drift in the direction of immanentism.

[1] B. 1869; now Professor of Moral Philosophy at Edinburgh.

[2] See *The Problem of Conduct* (1901), its author's first published work, the chapters in which on religion are of great interest, although they are written from a point of view which is different from that which he now occupies.

What are those gains? They are, to put them shortly, the revelation of the unity which is present in the widest differences, and the elimination from religion of that character of sheer arbitrariness which has so often been attributed to it during its history by friend and foe alike. Both these gains are such as Christianity in particular is bound to welcome, as congruous with its fundamental convictions that there is *one* God, the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, and one Lord Jesus Christ, his *only* Son.

I will now attempt briefly to expand this statement.

In the very infancy of thought there is present, though only in germ, the recognition that the world in which man finds himself living and acting is *one*, notwithstanding the manifold diversity of the objects with which he is from moment to moment confronted. This fundamental characteristic of human thought must inevitably be reflected in his religion. Without entering into particulars of the controversy among anthropologists respecting the 'primitive monotheism' which some investigators have detected behind the more obvious phenomenon of the propitiation of many spirits by uncivilized peoples, I venture the suggestion that the performance by human groups of a tribal ritual designed to avert the hostility or to win the favour of unseen powers controlling the means of subsistence and the environment of the life of the group, while it lends itself

to a much more elaborate development and forms the basis of a later polytheism, yet at no period excludes the instinctive invocation by the individual, on occasions of imminent distress or peril, of a higher power, imagined (if at all) just as 'One above', corresponding to the unity against which for each single person, however little he may reflect upon it, the whole drama of his life is set.[1]

The progress of religion is ever towards a fuller realization of this 'One above' who is, as St. Paul said to the Athenians about the 'unknown God'[2] whom he found mentioned in an inscription and identified with the God of his own people, 'ignorantly worshipped' by all men; however heterogeneous and discordant the Pantheon which they publicly acknowledge, however vague and inconsistent their conception of the Power behind and above its members. Often some one of these, Siva or Zeus or Jahwe, is identified with the 'One above', and certain of the attributes traditionally ascribed to the deity thus honoured are carried over into the picture formed of this supreme object of worship. His relations to other objects of religious veneration, to the world, and to man, become the theme of theological speculation. The doctrine of Christianity, inherited from the parent religion of Israel, emphasized the exclusive right of the highest God to divine worship, his absolute and unshared origination of all being beside his own (expressed in the traditional affirma-

[1] Cp. Heiler, *Das Gebet*, p. 131. [2] Acts xvii. 23.

tion that he 'created all things out of nothing') and his providential ordering of human history, in which Christians saw no aimless recurrence of illusory appearances but a drama in which God is himself the protagonist. These features of the Christian doctrine of God, however, will be found to imply, if the principles which they involve be fully carried out, such an immanence of the Divine Being in everything that is real as is suggested by Spinoza's saying, *Quicquid est in Deo est*,[1] and traced out (with whatever measure of success) in the ambitious enterprise of the Hegelian logic. Whatever criticism may be justly urged against the latter—and I doubt whether many have studied its details carefully enough (I certainly do not pretend even to have begun so to study it) as to entitle them to come forward as its critics—a thoroughly Christian view of the world cannot afford to compromise its fundamental monotheism by allowing that there is any reality in which God is *not* immanent and which, in the last resort, can claim to exist independently of his immanence therein.

With respect to the second article of the Christian creed, the theology of the nineteenth century exhibited, it is true, two opposite tendencies, though both of them immanentist, in the sense which I have been giving to the word. In the Ritschlian school a desire to find in Christianity a value all its own led sometimes to a 'Christocentricism' which would

[1] *Ethica*, i. 15.

scarcely allow that the religion mediated through Christ and the religion not so mediated were species of the same genus. But the more truly fruitful tendency was that which found in Christianity the line of development entitled by its results to be regarded as the principal line of development taken by a capacity belonging to the human race as a whole. This view was supported by the historical and critical discoveries whereby the sacred Scriptures and traditions of Christendom were delivered from a Melchizedekian isolation and shown to have a numerous and often unsuspected kindred all over the world. Very early in the history of the Christian religion the main body of the Church had refused to follow Marcion in seeing in Christ's advent a sudden invasion from without of a world whose maker and lord was other than the Father whom Christ came to reveal. But the full working out of the principle involved in this refusal was inevitably delayed until, with the advance of historical knowledge in the nineteenth century, Christianity could be envisaged as the culmination of a universal process which was at once God's revelation of himself to man and man's discovery of God; for how could God be discovered except by his own act, or reveal himself except to a mind prepared for the reception of the revelation? The thought of Christianity as immanent from the first in the developing human consciousness of God was not indeed discontinuous with the traditional view of Christ as the incarnation in the fullness

of time of the eternal Word in whose image man was made; but it was essentially incongruous with any view of it which saw in it a manifestation of a despotic caprice which it would be merely impious rebellion to reproach for its failure to observe the measures of our reason or the requirements of our morality.

It may be—I think it is—true that, in stressing the unity immanent in all the infinitely various forms of real being, and the mutual harmony and solidarity of all God's revelations of himself in human life and history, things were not unfrequently forgotten which should have been borne in mind. Men sometimes overlooked the fact that if there be, in Shakespeare's phrase,[1] 'some soul of goodness in things evil', yet the 'things evil' are really evil; that in the existence of evil, even when seen or divined to be contributory to the existence of a greater good than is by us conceivable without it, there is an enigma which can be solved by no philosophical formula; and that the history of religion, like all history, is no mere symbol of general truths for which some other and better symbol might be found, but a process in which unique individual persons perform unique individual acts. Blindness to these facts was bound to bring, and indeed has now brought, a reaction in its train. This reaction asserts the rights of the conceptions complementary to those insisted upon in the preceding age, and contends that the immanence of God does not exclude, but rather postulates his transcendence;

[1] *King Henry V*, IV. i. 5.

that his revelation of himself in Christ is none the less unique because it is not isolated. It is now coming to be widely suspected that unity and coherence can only be ascribed to the world in space and time by those who, through other methods than those employed by the empirical or even the mathematical sciences, have arrived at the recognition of an eternal Reality whereon it depends. It behoves then those who have arrived at this recognition to attempt to do equal justice alike to the self-existent Reality apart from which what is called 'religious experience' is no revelation of God and to the religious experience apart from which the self-existent Reality must remain for ever unrevealed. The moment is favourable for such an attempt, and the task set to the theologians of the next generation is that of taking the fullest possible advantage of the opportunity offered.

VIII

CONCLUSION

I HAVE reached my last lecture of this course, and am more than ever conscious of the grave omissions of which I have been guilty. I have frankly admitted[1] my intention of allowing my personal opportunities of becoming familiar with certain thinkers and schools of thought rather than with others to guide my choice of the episodes in the history of the period studied in this book to which I should specially call the attention of my readers. But I confess that this admission is but a poor excuse for my neglect not only of many thinkers and teachers of importance—of men as notable as Robertson,[2] Westcott,[3] and Church[4] among Anglicans; Dale,[5] Fairbairn,[6] and Forsyth[7] among Nonconformists—and of schools and movements as interesting as, for example, that

[1] Above, p. 4.

[2] Frederick William Robertson, b. 1816, d. 1853. His *Sermons*, delivered as Incumbent of Trinity Chapel, Brighton, 1847–53, are of rare excellence. His *Life and Letters* were edited by Stopford Brooke, 1868.

[3] Above, p. 86.

[4] Above, p. 101*n*.

[5] B. 1829; d. 1895. Minister of Carr's Lane Chapel, Birmingham: author of a well-known book on *The Atonement* (1st ed., 1875; 9th ed., 1884).

[6] B. 1838; d. 1912. First Principal of Mansfield College, Oxford: author of *Christ in Modern Theology* (1893) and *The Philosophy of the Christian Religion* (1902).

[7] B. 1848; d. 1921. Principal of Hackney Theological College.

associated with the name of Keswick[1]—but also of the rich material contained in the writings of some who, while they stand outside of the ranks of professed philosophers and theologians, are commonly more representative of the public mind, and exert a greater influence upon it, than those who are found within those ranks. Thus I have not mentioned Samuel Butler,[2] the witty and incisive satirist alike of the orthodox religion and of the orthodox natural science of the later nineteenth century. I have said nothing again of George Meredith[3] or of Thomas Hardy,[4] novelists and poets, very different from each other in their circumstances, their outlook, and their device of themes, but both interpreters of the comedy and tragedy (Meredith on the whole rather of the comedy, Hardy on the whole rather of the tragedy) of human life, neither of whom set their drama against the background of another world, the thought of the issues of human life wherein might check our enjoyment of the humour or lessen the poignancy of the pathos to be found in the adventures which befall between the cradle and the grave.[5] I have not referred to such eminent men of

[1] See *The Keswick Convention* by C. F. Harford (1907). Cf. C. J. Shebbeare, *Religion in an Age of Doubt* (1914), c. 12.

[2] B. 1835; d. 1902. Author of *Erewhon* (1872).

[3] B. 1828; d. 1909.

[4] B. 1840; d. 1928.

[5] Interesting studies of Butler and Hardy, in relation to the problems of religion, will be found in Mr. R. Schafer's *Christianity and Naturalism* (1926).

letters among the departed as Walter Pater,[1] Robert Louis Stevenson,[2] or John Galsworthy,[3] or among those still with us as Mr. Bernard Shaw,[4] Mr. Rudyard Kipling,[5] Mr. H. G. Wells,[6] or Mr. Chesterton;[7] although all these with others (some of a younger generation than they and therefore perhaps more significant of the temper of the present time) have given striking expression to what has been in the thoughts of their less articulate countrymen and have also suggested to these reflections which they would not otherwise have entertained respecting those problems of man's value and destiny with which religion is concerned. It would be nothing short of absurd were I to attempt to treat of so large a topic as that of their contribution to the religious thought of England in these concluding words of mine. I shall therefore content myself with pointing out some contrasts which may afford fruit for profitable reflection.

If we turn back from the present day to the great novelists of the middle of the nineteenth century, to Dickens or to Thackeray, we find in the first place the institutions of religion—church going, Sunday observance, Bible reading—taken for granted as part of the accepted environment of the life at least of the educated classes, even if frequently neglected by many individuals among them; and in the second place, a habit of assuming that there lies beyond

[1] B. 1839; d. 1894. Fellow of Brasenose College, Oxford.
[2] B. 1850; d. 1894. [3] B. 1867; d. 1933. [4] B. 1856.
[5] B. 1865.- 1936 [6] B. 1866. [7] B. 1874.

this life another, pictured, generally speaking, much as it is presented in the tradition of popular Christianity—as a life in which the inequalities of this world are redressed, the good rewarded, the unhappy consoled, and the wicked punished. The references to such a life are often sentimental and frequently conventional rather than dogmatic or expressive of personal conviction (although both Dickens and Thackeray appear to have been genuine believers in a future state of this description[1]); but the anticipation of it is assumed as normal.

Even in the romances of George Eliot, who, like her friends Lewes and Spencer, was in her own person an unbeliever in individual immortality, a reader unaware of her position and not specially interested in the question of her religious views might easily read many of her chief works without discovering this. As to the place of the Bible, of Sunday, of church-going in the life of the nation she, of course, as a painter of the manners of her time, gave the same testimony as her contemporaries; while, as a matter of fact, her speculative interest in religious problems caused her to give a greater prominence to the religion of her characters and to the religious life of society than either Thackeray or Dickens. Indeed in

[1] See Forster, *Life of Dickens*, i, p. 297, ii, pp. 420 ff.; H. Merivale and F. T. Marzials, *Life of Thackeray* (1891), pp. 210, 211. The remarks in the latter work on the change which had taken place in the conventions of novelists in respect of religion since the time of Thackeray are worthy of notice.

the world painted by the latter religious observance plays a remarkably small part; but its recognition as a normal feature of the social environment is in marked contrast with the lack of such recognition in much, perhaps in most, of the fiction of to-day.

Of that portion of the late Mr. Galsworthy's well-known *Forsyte Saga*[1] in which he gives a picture of a period anterior to that in which his own grown-up life had been passed I should indeed be inclined to say that it is incomplete in consequence of his silence respecting the impact on the society which he is describing of religious institutions which might often enough have meant but little to its members, but which it would have been impossible for them to ignore so completely as they ignore them in his pages. I think that he is here reading back contemporary conditions into the life of a previous generation. Now, however, there can be no question that the position is as our novelists represent it and extremely different from the position in the days of the great novelists of Queen Victoria's reign, at the beginning of the period with which this course of lectures deals; nay, even from the position in the middle of that period.

A number of causes of very various kinds—ranging from the invention of the motor-car and of 'wireless' to the wide diffusion of historical and scientific information and the consequent loss of faith in the infallibility of Scripture—have produced

[1] 1922.

a very rapid change in the habits of the community in respect of church-going, Sunday observance, and Bible reading. A Dickens character, if we find him in church at all, and if he is not a mere insincere exploiter of female religiosity, like Chadband[1] or Stiggins,[2] is merely performing a conventional duty with sacred associations, and is little or not at all concerned to criticize what is there said or done. A modern novelist is far more likely than Dickens to introduce a zealous and intelligent church-goer, genuinely interested in and attached to the services in which he (or she) takes part; one is, for example, never surprised to find oneself, in reading contemporary fiction, called upon to sympathize with the doubts of a priest about his creed or with the satisfaction afforded to the emotions by sacramental ritual. Yet it is almost a matter of course that the moral problems of life and its ultimate issues should be discussed as though no religious solution of the former or religious interpretation of the latter existed, which could engage the serious consideration of any one in the critical moments of his career. Conventional rules of conduct there may be, which have their importance as causing reactions on the part of society to breaches of them; but these are commonly represented as concerning the conscience of the individual no more than the etiquette of the drawing-room or the race-course.

Not only in the novelist's picture of social life

[1] In *Bleak House*. [2] In *The Pickwick Papers*.

but in that life itself, one is nowadays aware that a different code prevails than that inculcated by Christian tradition. A century ago a man of honour considered himself bound in certain circumstances to fight a duel, although the sinfulness of such encounters was admitted and their compatibility with strict Christian duties asserted by no one. Nor did certain breaches of the Christian rule of monogamous marriage then (or perhaps at any time since Christianity became an established religion) entail a social reprobation corresponding to the gravity with which a Christian pastor is bound to regard all such. But a certain homage—if only a lip homage—was paid to a standard which was supposed—even by those who had no serious intention of living up to it—to enjoy a divine sanction. To-day, on the other hand, I think it may be said that there is a current morality of comradeship which regards what in English slang is called 'letting down' a comrade as the unpardonable sin, and the releasing (even by means of a solemn lie in the courts of law) of a wife or husband from the obligation of the marriage tie, when he or she desires to escape it, as a paramount duty. The conflict between this code of behaviour and the traditional code of Christendom may be noted, but in a very great number—probably in the majority of cases—it is not looked upon as a matter of importance, since the halo of divinity has faded from that code in the eyes of many who yet are by no means without moral scruples and convictions of

their own, and who, in practice if not in theory, ascribe to certain imperatives the character which Kant called 'categorical'.

This is no place for interconfessional controversy; and I will only call attention, without discussing it, to a difference which may be observed between the Roman Catholic Church and the Churches which do not acknowledge the papal supremacy in their attitude towards this revolt of the present generation—a revolt which is not only practical but may be said to be a matter of principle—against the authority of the traditional Christian code of conduct. As Pope Pius IX proclaimed in the celebrated *Syllabus* of 1863, the Roman Pontiff acknowledges no obligation to attempt a reconciliation of the sacred doctrine whereof he claims to be the divinely appointed custodian and interpreter with the principles of modern civilization; and the Roman Church resolutely declines to discuss terms with any pretender to a moral or spiritual insight capable of correcting the teaching which she believes herself to have in trust to deliver intact to each generation of mankind in turn. This *intransigeance*, accompanied as it is by the trained knowledge of the human heart possessed by its directors of conscience, naturally commands, even among those who have not submitted to its claims, a respect for this Church which is often refused to societies which are more exposed to the charge of not knowing their own mind. At the same time those who have themselves no quarrel with the

Christian tradition of ethical teaching, even while desirous to incorporate with it modern ideas which they find in themselves acceptable and believe to be in principle reconcilable with the fundamental Christian law, will readily confess that they are not to be pitied who can live according to the well-tried rules enjoined by that tradition without raising questions to which it does not provide an answer.

The Church of England—and the same, no doubt, may be said of other Churches, but I will speak of that to which I myself belong, and which therefore I know best—has not displayed officially a like *intransigeance*, though a considerable section of it professes agreement with the unyielding attitude of the Roman Church. Its principal representatives in recent years have on the contrary shown a hospitality to new ideas, a readiness to discuss what can be said for and against them, which has perhaps seldom been paralleled in the history of religious organizations. The trend of its recent theological development, in the general acceptance of modern critical methods as guides in the study both of the Scriptures and of Christian antiquity has involved the abandonment of belief in the inerrancy of the former and an attitude with respect to the latter irreconcilable alike with the Roman Catholic view of the papacy as belonging to the original and unalterable constitution of the Christian Church and with the older Protestant view of it as a mere antichristian usurpation. Modern Anglicanism has concentrated its teaching on the

Person of Christ; while at the same time its critical view of the Bible record of his life has encouraged considerable freedom in its presentation and interpretation of his teaching. Although I do not think (judging from the newspapers) that the fact is known to a large part of the public, the present leaders of the Church of England are probably open to criticism rather on the ground of over-readiness to entertain novelties than on that of a stagnant conservatism. It is, however, no doubt true of it as of other bodies that the rank and file lag far behind their leaders.

Nevertheless those who, like myself, bred in clerical surroundings, can look back over sixty years, may take hope for the future of religion in England from the immense progress which, within what in the lifetime of a nation or a Church is but a very short period, has been made in two respects of the highest importance.

One of these is *candour*. There is vastly less than there was, even less than half a century ago, of refusal on the part of those to whom the youth of my country can turn for guidance to face facts from whatever quarter brought forward—by history, by anthropology, by natural science, by psycho-analysis—which it would have seemed to many of an earlier generation could hardly be discussed without a shudder at the blasphemies to which the discussion might give occasion. Lack of dogmatic assurance, even inadequate appreciation of the ordinary man's natural desire to have a definite answer to a definite

question, is, I believe, a cheap price to pay for the abandonment of a reticence which, if pious, was also cowardly, and inconsistent with a robust faith in truth.

The other instance of progress to which I would advert is progress in *charity*. This is indeed closely connected with progress in candour. Fifty years ago even wide-minded ministers of one communion would consider that commendation of those of another needed some explanation; and would feel a certain daring excitement on sharing with such a common platform. Now there is a degree of intimate co-operation, both in the mission field abroad and in study and social work at home, which was undreamed of then; and this has been rendered possible by the change from what may be called the *undenominational* to the *interdenominational* theory of intercourse between men of different confessions. By the *undenominational* theory I mean the theory that the differences between the confessions are on the whole unimportant and might well be discarded in the interest of unity; by the *interdenominational* (for which the great Student Christian Movement has stood and which it has done so much to propagate) the theory that these differences are—or may be—of the highest importance and involve contributions to the common stock of any united Church in the future, without which it would be fatally impoverished. This *interdenominational* theory implies the mutual confession of defects and the abandonment of the ideal of mere submission

to some one orthodox body of all the rest, which have wandered into error. This ideal of submission is indeed still that of the Roman Catholic Church; but Christians of other communions which no longer acknowledge that ideal have come to recognize that this very persistence on the part of that Church in maintaining a position which they have themselves abandoned is the other side of a consistent upholding before a world of warring nations of a unity which indeed disappointed in the years from 1914 to 1918 some who had set their hopes upon it, yet, when all is said, is in many respects not merely nominally but effectively supra-national, and that upon the historic foundation than which the Apostle says[1] no other can be laid, namely Jesus Christ. If the recognition of mutual need between the Roman Catholic Church, the most numerous of Christian communions, and those which are separated from her fellowship is still in the main unilateral, it may not always remain so; and the violent suppression of Modernism within her borders twenty years ago, however deplorable some of the incidents whereby it was attended, will not blind all observers to indications that even the Roman Catholic Church is less unaffected than her official pronouncements would suggest by the movements of thought which surge around her. It may be that the wise and saintly Friedrich von Hügel was in the right when he refused to join some of his modernist friends in despairing of

[1] 1 Cor. iii. 11.

the future of their Church in the agony of their expulsion from its fold.

But prophecy, says the English proverb, is the most gratuitous form of error; and it is certainly not the province of an Olaus Petri lecturer. I will return to the appraisement of the present situation of religion in England.

Unquestionably there are many grounds for serious apprehension. It may be true—as I think it is—that what attendance at church there now is, is in proportion more often the expression of a genuine desire to worship than when it was a social habit. Yet it cannot be a matter of unconcern to those who know what they themselves have owed to that habit, even when they found it burdensome, that a generation should be growing up to whom the Bible stories and the Scriptural phraseology, which were to their fathers as much part of the permanent furniture of their minds as the alphabet or the multiplication table, are altogether unfamiliar, or at best a piece of school-learning, got up for the purposes of examination, to be forgotten when the business of life is begun. It would, I am sure, be in the true interest of the nation to provide, if it may be done, against this loss of a great tradition, of which in the past even severe critics of Christianity like Thomas Huxley acknowledged the value not only for the religious but for the whole spiritual and intellectual life of the people.

Again, it is not possible for any one who holds, as the leaders not only of Christian but of naturalistic

thought in England in the nineteenth century (such as Spencer and Huxley) agreed in holding, that the Christian ethical tradition, in its main features, is the cornerstone of a healthy social life, to regard with equanimity its displacement by an ideal of self-expression, such as is now in vogue. In that ideal there is little to remind one of that august conception of Duty which in the preceding age received the homage alike of the most eminent defenders and of the most eminent opponents of the ancient religion of the country. We may recall Wordsworth's magnificent invocation of Duty (in a poem written before the period had begun with which these lectures deal) as the 'stern daughter of the voice of God' and the story of George Eliot talking—well on in that period—to Frederic Myers[1] 'with terrible earnestness' of God, Immortality, Duty, and explaining to him 'how inconceivable the first, how unbelievable the second, and yet how peremptory and absolute the third'. Nevertheless it may fairly be said that the properly Christian ethic is rather one of love than of duty, and that there is a closer kinship between that ethic and the ethic of self-expression than between the latter and the ethic of duty as it appears, for example, in Kant, in abstraction from that conception of God which in Christianity has the power to

[1] B. 1843; d. 1901. He was one of the founders of the Society of Psychical Research. He tells this story of George Eliot in an essay upon her included in *Essays* (*Modern*) (1883); see p. 269.

transmute duty into love. Moreover, as has been already remarked, there is often combined with the ethic of self-expression a strong sense of the obligations of comradeship which, though it cannot, I believe, find an adequate basis except in a doctrine of conduct which recognizes the love of God as well as the love of our neighbour, may at least serve to prepare the way for such a doctrine, if only by revealing its own insufficiency without it. It behoves those who care for the elements in the Christian ethical tradition which are in danger of disappearing from modern civilization to present them as the indispensable corrective of the pessimism which must inevitably attend upon all attempts to realize in this world, whereinto we find ourselves born, the ideal of individual self-expression unbalanced by any other.

Without, however, minimizing the real dangers to the soul of the nation which are connected with the decay of certain assumptions and habits which were general in the society of half a century ago I should myself be disposed to look forward to the future of religion in my country with faith and hope; relying upon certain signs, by saying a few words of which I will conclude this course of lectures.

In the first place there is, I think, on the whole, less hostility to Christian religion among those who do not practice it, now that its interference with them is so slight, than there was when it appeared as a persecuting tyranny strongly entrenched in a

fortress of established prejudices, and treating all criticism of its dogmas as treason. Among the leaders of philosophic and scientific thought there are indeed one or two who may be reckoned its declared enemies; but even these profess less often than their predecessors to be able to do for men without religion what religion formerly professed to do for them; while others are far more ready to propound theological speculations of their own than were the critics of orthodox Christianity in days when it was usual to regard theology as the preserve of its authorized expositors, into which those who could not accept them as guides refrained (though often with a certain irony) from intruding. This new freedom of theological speculation is, speaking generally, by no means resented by the representatives of the Christian tradition; and the speculators are welcomed by them as partners in the discussion of a subject in which all men alike are interested and the whole truth about which is in the possession of none.

The true enemy of religion in the modern world is not philosophy or science; it is the purely secular habit of mind engendered in the hurrying life of great cities, where the heavens are veiled from view by the blaze of electric light, and a display of many-coloured signs intended to advertise all manner of commercial enterprises is substituted for the solemn spectacle which Kant placed side by side with the moral law as an object of reverent awe; where the

news of all the world is continually proclaimed by night and day and emphasized in proportion not to its true importance but to its journalistic effectiveness; and whence there is rapidly spread all over the globe, through the improvement of the means of communication, an external similarity of life among peoples of utterly different traditions, who are thus torn from their spiritual roots in the religious experience of their forefathers. To this secular habit of mind it is probable that Christianity alone of the historical religions can hope to offer an effectual resistance. But, if it is to do this successfully, it must in at least two ways change its mode of presenting its claims to mankind.

In the first place it must frankly recognize not only in the daily life of its followers but in its religious phraseology the genuine goodness of civilization with its science, its art, its ingenuity, even its comforts, not merely as means to other worldly ends. It must cease to use language which suggests that the true servants of God have nothing to do with these except, while realizing their essential vanity, to utilize them for the promotion of their own or others' salvation, conceived as a form of life to which the 'gifts of civilization'[1] bear no intrinsic relation at all. I believe that a modification of traditional language in this direction is necessary to make the presentation of Christianity to the modern world consistent or intelligible; but I believe also that it

[1] See above, p. 101.

is fully warranted by the central doctrine of our religion, that of the redemption of the whole of human life through the coming in the flesh of the eternal Word of God.

Let me, before passing to the other change in the presentation of Christianity to the world of which I wish to speak, say very briefly that what I have just said must not be taken as implying any censure of asceticism, or even of monastic institutions, as part of the practice or machinery of the Christian life. I hold that the recognition of a special call to celibacy or to retirement from society for the sake of religious contemplation or service is perfectly compatible with a full acknowledgement of the intrinsic goodness of forms of life not specifically religious. The historical circumstances which made the disuse of the monastic life in the Churches of the Reformation inevitable this is not the place to discuss. I believe that in Sweden its abolition was less violent and more gradual than in England; but there was loss as well as gain in its disappearance, and the revival of religious orders in the Church of England under the inspiration of the Oxford Movement is to be regarded not as a relapse but rather as a reform. There is no contradiction, I would repeat, but rather congruity between the recognition of the autonomy and intrinsic value of non-religious forms of spiritual life and that of the no less intrinsic value of such devotion as the institution of monasteries is intended to facilitate.

The other difference in the presentation of Christianity to the world which is demanded from the Church to-day is that it should be made by a united Church and not by a host of discordant bodies mutually antagonistic and denying to each other the right to speak in the name of Christ. No wise man indeed expects that the realization by a united Christendom of the ideal expressed in the prayer, which the writer of the Fourth Gospel places in the mouth of Jesus addressing his Father in heaven before his passion, 'that they may be one as we are'[1] is at hand, or that it can be looked for in other than a distant future. Yet it has become within my own lifetime a practical ideal as it was not fifty years ago. Some important unions between Christian bodies have actually been accomplished, others are under consideration. Mutual co-operation in the mission field has gone farther than would have been thought possible quite a few years since. The restoration of intercommunion between two Churches so similar in history and constitution as the national Churches of Sweden and England was comparatively easy; but the event is none the less one in which every Christian heart may well rejoice; and none can have rejoiced more than that of the great champion of peace between nations and churches, the passionate lover of the great cause of the reunion of Christendom whom we so greatly mourn, the late Archbishop of Upsala, Nathan Söderblom. I expressed at the begin-

[1] John xvii. 11.

ning of my course my deep regret that my hope of renewing when in Upsala for the delivery of these lectures my intercourse with him in the flesh had been disappointed by the sudden call to rest which came to him in the summer of 1931. I mentioned also his wish that I should take as my subject the position of religion in the world to-day. If I may seem in this last lecture to have wandered somewhat from my special theme, which he accepted in lieu of that which he had suggested—and yet I do not think that the topics on which I have touched are irrelevant to that special theme—I could offer as my excuse that I desired to conform as far as possible to his original desire.

I hope that this very imperfect sketch of the history of religious thought in England since the middle of the last century may at any rate in some slight degree contribute to that mutual acquaintance which is so important a step towards the mutual union and concord among all who profess and call themselves Christians, for which we pray, and to which we look forward in faith and hope.

ADDITIONAL NOTES

A

p. 77. It should however be observed that Coleridge had given a philosophical interpretation of the story of the Fall in *Aids to Reflection* (1825), cix. c. 24. Cp. J. H. Green, *Spiritual Philosophy founded on the Teaching of the late Samuel Taylor Coleridge* (1865), vol. ii, pp. 240 ff.; pp. 336 ff.; also J. H. Muirhead, *Coleridge as Philosopher* (1930), p. 238 n.

B

p. 91. On the 'candle of the Lord' in the Cambridge Platonists see J. H. Muirhead, *The Platonic Tradition in Anglo-Saxon Philosophy* (1931), pp. 29, 41. Cp. Locke, *Essay* i. 1. §5.

C

ch. v. On the whole subject of this chapter cp. Muirhead's *Platonic Tradition in Anglo-Saxon Philosophy*, which gives perhaps the first comprehensive account which has yet appeared of the movement here described, by one who speaks with authority, having been himself associated with some of its principal leaders.

D

p. 98. Troeltsch's ignoring of the British idealists is all the more remarkable that his own article on 'Idealism' in Hastings's *Encyclopædia of Religion and Ethics* (vii, pp. 89ff.), published in 1914, shows him to have been not unacquainted with the elder writers of the school.

E

p. 123. G. F. Stout, b. 1860; Prof. of Logic and Metaphysics, St. Andrews.
F. C. S. Schiller, b. 1864; Fellow of Corpus Christi College, Oxford.

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